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# MESSIANIC PROPHECY.

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# MESSIANIC PROPHECY:

Its Origin, Historical Character, and Relation to  
New Testament Fulfilment.

BY DR. EDWARD RIEHM,

PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY, HALLE.

*TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN,*

WITH THE APPROBATION OF THE AUTHOR,

BY

THE REV. JOHN JEFFERSON.

EDINBURGH:

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1876.



EXTRACT FROM A LETTER WRITTEN BY THE AUTHOR  
TO THE TRANSLATOR.

“It gives me great pleasure to hear that you have taken the trouble to translate my treatise on Messianic Prophecy into the English language. I have found that many believing theologians in Germany, who were suspicious of criticism and severe historical exegesis, have testified that they are reconcilable both with faith in divine revelation under the Old Testament economy, and the acknowledgment that all divine prophecy is Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus. It was the third section especially which had this result. I shall be glad if the treatise wins the same testimony from English readers, for thereby the way will be prepared for an understanding and reconciliation between the orthodox and the historico-critical direction of Old Testament science.

PROF. D. ED. RIEHM.”



## AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

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**F**ROM the most various quarters the wish has been frequently expressed, that the three articles on Messianic Prophecy written by me for *Studien und Kritiken*, in the years 1865 and 1869, should be made accessible to a wider circle by being published in a separate volume. It has come, too, from men whose judgment I could not fail to respect, partly on account of their superior acquaintance with the subject and its existing literature, and partly because their wishes assured me that my desire to contribute something towards the reconciliation of contradictory principles in the sphere of Old Testament interpretation had not been altogether in vain. I hesitated, however, to accede to their requests, in the hope that the essential contents of the articles might find a place in a larger work on Old Testament theology; but being compelled by other literary responsibilities to postpone for some time the execution of that work, the continued demand for the articles, sustained as it was by favouring circumstances, led me to decide upon their separate publication. Since the appearance of the

first two articles, I have five times delivered lectures on "Prophecy and Messianic Prediction," and again considered in special discourses every Messianic scripture in detail; and I have cherished the hope of being able to recast the work, so that, with respect to Messianic prophecy itself, it should be more comprehensive and complete, while at the same time the exegetical results would have been more firmly established. But this also I was constrained to give up, not entirely however for the reason that it required more time than I had at my disposal, but because its accomplishment demanded essential changes in the distribution and arrangement of the material, and the result would have been, not the republication of the original articles, but the issue of a new work. Besides, if it be the will of God, my intention to publish a complete Old Testament theology is only postponed, and the substance of this volume will be used then in its true relation and order, though, perhaps, in briefer compass than any revision would have secured. These considerations have led me to allow my treatise to retain essentially its original form, and to content myself with here and there giving clearer and more complete expression to my views. It is evident that the theological and exegetical literature of the Old Testament, which has appeared in the meantime, has received marked attention. May this little work in its new form still further contribute to establish the conviction, that if the principles of grammatico-historical exegesis be fully adopted, and "every well-grounded



result of the historical criticism of the Old Testament writings and narratives be acknowledged, the divine revelations and interpositions in the history of Israel, preparatory to the coming of Christ and His kingdom, will not be darkened, but will appear in a brighter light, because presented before our eyes in tangible historic reality."

DR. EDWARD RIEHM.

HALLE, *June 3*, 1875.



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## INTRODUCTION.

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WE use the term "Messianic prophecy" in that wide sense in which it is common to include all the Old Testament predictions concerning the final completion of the kingdom of God and the connected glorification of His people. Messianic prophecy in the narrower sense,—namely, the prediction of an ideal king and ruler of God's people springing from the house of David, with whose advent the beginning of the last dispensation is connected,—cannot alone be the subject of inquiry, since it is most intimately connected with the general question. Not only so, but among Christian theologians it has always been firmly held that all the Old Testament predictions of blessing in a future dispensation have their fulfilment in and through Christ. Sharing in this conviction, we appropriate the generally accepted wider meaning of the phrase "Messianic prophecy."

There needs no special proof to show that the view we have pointed out as firmly held by us is repeatedly taught most emphatically by Christ and His

apostles. Every one remembers the saying of Christ, that the writings of the Old Testament testify of Him (John v. 39); that His sufferings and death, His resurrection and His glorification, are predicted in the law of Moses and in the prophets and in the Psalms (Luke xxiv. 44); that what is there written of Him must be fulfilled (Matt. xxvi. 54; Luke xxii. 37); and that the Scripture cannot be broken (John x. 35). Every one knows how the apostles declared, that what God had spoken by the mouths of His holy prophets had been fulfilled in the advent, life, and work of Christ, in the salvation which He brought, and in the kingdom which He founded; and especially how Paul affirmed that God had promised before by the prophets the gospel of His Son (Rom. i. 2); and that all His promises are yea and amen in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. i. 20). The more closely the doctrines of the New Testament writers have been examined, the clearer it has been seen of what fundamental significance is the testimony that the new covenant is the completion of the old, and the fulfilment of its predictions; and especially how the apostolic doctrine of the importance of the person and work of Christ, even in its fullest development, recognises as its foundation and starting-point the belief that Jesus is the promised Messiah of the Old Testament (1).

As the New Testament justifies the proposition, so also does the Old, so far as its Messianic predictions pass beyond the limits of its own sphere. It not only proclaims the extension of the theocracy, then

limited to Israel, so as to include all nations in a universal divine kingdom, but it distinctly teaches that at "the end of the days" there should be a thorough internal transformation, and an essential change in the nature of the relations existing between God and His people. There will then be no Levitical priesthood, no special prophetic class; for all Israel will be a nation of priests (Isa. lxi. 6), and will be endowed with the gift of prophecy (Joel ii. 28). All, without distinction, will be acquainted with Jehovah, and will be taught of Him, so that no one will need to be instructed by others (Jer. xxxi. 34; Isa. liv. 13). The law will not be written upon tables of stone, but will be inscribed upon the heart (Jer. xxxi. 33). Men shall no more remember the ark of the covenant, since the gracious presence of God among His people will not be confined to the Holy of Holies, but in all Jerusalem He will dwell and reveal Himself, and there Israel shall assemble for worship; to it shall the Gentiles seek, and it shall be called the throne of the Lord (Jer. iii. 17). The provisions of the covenant will be entirely changed; God will make a new covenant with His people, different from that which He made with their fathers (Jer. xxxi. 31-34). And all this will be the result of a last great manifestation of mercy and full revelation of His grace, signalizing the close of all preceding dispensations, and throwing them completely into the shade. Who can deny that the end which Old Testament prophecy had in view when it passed the limits of the old covenant was really no other than

that which, according to the New Testament and the history and personal experience of every true believer, is increasingly realized in Christ? All Old Testament representations which look beyond the borders of the Mosaic economy point to this issue, namely, that the kingdom of God will find its perfection in the full forgiveness of sins, the transforming work of the Holy Spirit, everywhere poured out, and in the bringing of every individual member into fellowship with God,—a blessing then no longer limited to Israel.

The general position, that all divine predictions are yea and amen in Christ Jesus, requires a more strict definition. The relation of Old Testament prophecy to its fulfilment, as recorded in the New, must be subjected to a closer scrutiny. The time has gone by in which a dogmatic interpretation can find all evangelical truths in the Old Testament, only less clearly expressed, and hidden under the veil of symbol and type. The propriety and necessity of a rigorously historical examination and exposition has been generally acknowledged; but at the same time—and the Christology of Hengstenberg is partly to be thanked for it—the conviction upon which we proceed is beyond controversy available, with increasing power and in ever widening circles, for the establishment of the Christian faith. How stands now the strictly historical exposition of Old Testament prophecy in relation to this conviction? Does it not appear as if it undermined the same, or at least in a suspicious manner loosened the bond which, by the correspondence of prediction



and fulfilment, binds the Old Testament and the New together? Theological science has in our day endeavoured to find a satisfactory answer to the question—In what manner and to what extent has Old Testament prophecy anticipated the gospel of God concerning His Son? Certainly an important inquiry! for the answer we give decides whether and how the consciousness of Christ concerning the relation of His office and work to the entire earlier revelation is historically justified and sustained; whether the wonderful dealings of God with mankind, and especially with Israel, had a definite end, and whether that end was Jesus Christ. It decides also the measure of importance which we Christians are to attach to the Old Testament.

Important as the inquiry is, it is not less difficult. Many, from different standpoints, have attempted its solution, and have given us valuable contributions towards the desired result; but that the truth may be fully brought to light, there is still ample room for the exercise of united efforts and various gifts. And this work, though not claiming to be comprehensive or exhaustive, but merely a connected discussion of the three points which are of greatest importance to a general understanding of the subject, may not be without its value.

In order to obtain a just view of the relation of prophecy to its fulfilment, we must take the right means of ascertaining the contents of the prophecies themselves. This is certainly not done by those who

are accustomed to inquire only what the Spirit of God intended in any given prediction, without troubling (2) themselves to ascertain the sense which the prophets themselves attached to their utterances, and in which they wished to be understood by their contemporaries ; for how is the sense intended by the Divine Spirit ascertained ? Only by studying the prophecies in the light reflected upon them by their fulfilment. It is desirable and proper for the practical religious use of the Old Testament, which essentially depends upon what the prophecies say to us, that unhesitatingly, by means of our full New Testament knowledge, the germ should be unfolded and developed. But it is necessary for scientific investigation, and especially for a satisfactory answer to our inquiry, to discover whither each individual prophecy, as a member of the whole body or a stage in the whole period of development, tends. Certainly it cannot be denied that it is only when we survey from the standpoint of the fulfilment of the counsels of God in Christ Jesus the whole combination of Old Testament prophecy and the progress of its historical development, that we can come to a full understanding of the teleological significance of any single prediction ; but it is a settlement of the *relation* of prophecy to its fulfilment, a fixing of the direction in which the former relates to the latter, and not an explanation of the contents of the prophecy itself, that we gain by this means ; for *what we do not learn until the period of fulfilment cannot be in the prophecy itself*. In this respect, only the sense in which the predictions

were necessarily understood at the time they were spoken can be of any value. It is therefore confusing when, from the standpoint of fulfilment, the contents of a prophecy are referred to Christ and His kingdom as the true and divinely intended sense ; and if we do not entirely reject the interpretation, we must at least be on our guard against receiving it as the contents of the prediction, when the relation of the latter to the former is to be decided. We have already renounced the knowledge of the real contents when prophecy and fulfilment are not kept perfectly distinct, and what we have learned from the one is put into the other ; or when we make the relation of prophecy to its fulfilment, when we have already more or less explained it by fulfilment, the exclusive subject of our researches. Many differences between those who attach the highest importance to agreement between prophecy and fulfilment, and those who preferably fix their attention upon the historical character of prophecy, depend solely on the fact that the former miss the true question in the manner indicated, and have not a distinct and accurate conception of the problem involved.

The meaning first given to prophecy when considered in the light of fulfilment, and the sense in which the prophets themselves and their contemporaries understood it, or the historical sense, must be regarded as perfectly distinct, and only the last can, strictly speaking, be the contents of any prediction ; and this alone can come into consideration when we are endeavouring to ascertain the relation between the utterances of the

prophets and their fulfilment ; and it is of the highest importance that, from this view of the case, we receive a scientific reply to our inquiry (3).

In what sense the prophets themselves desired their predictions to be understood by their contemporaries, has confessedly to be elucidated by psychological and historical exposition. Unanimously, as in our times, from the most various quarters the need of this method is acknowledged ; some theologians are hindered by a certain timidity and anxiety from fully admitting the result in individual cases. Especially is it so with those passages which have been long regarded in the Church as Messianic predictions, but which modern exegesis robs of that character. This hesitation comes to light also when the question is whether this or that really Messianic passage has a direct reference to the person of Christ or not, and most of all is it shown in the assertion of their Messianic contents. In general, they recognise the division between Old and New Testament knowledge, yet shrink from the confession that little New Testament doctrine is contained in those passages in which they are accustomed to find proof of the connection between Old Testament prediction and New Testament fulfilment. It may be asked whether there is not in this hesitation a little contempt for the germ origin of revelation, and, as it seems to us, an unbecoming censure upon the divine method of teaching. It is our duty to free ourselves thoroughly from the delusion that divine revelation and prediction can only be found in the Old Testament when we find expressed

therein New Testament truths. This timidity has its origin in the idea, that in order to recognise the connection between the two, the attention must be fixed upon isolated parts of it; but he who, on viewing a magnificent temple, an acknowledged masterpiece of architecture, confines his inspection to portions of it, and does not look at it as a whole, thoughtlessly expects to find in its separate parts more beauty and perfection of form than they have in themselves. But he who takes a survey of the whole can recognise without hesitation the imperfections and incompleteness of the single parts which in their order and harmony contribute to the production of one magnificent whole. So it is here. He who looks at the Old Testament economy as a whole, and has gained a full and decided conviction that the old covenant is designed to find its completion in the new, and that the development of Old Testament religion was a progress towards Christianity, will, in the interpretation of every Messianic prediction, recognise only such a revelation of God's merciful purposes as the rules of a severely historical method of exposition show it really to contain.


It is not our intention in this place, by means of such researches, to ascertain the contents of individual prophecies, but rather to present the results of exegetical labour; and this being done, our next endeavour will be, by means of an inquiry into the relations in which the contents of individual prophecies stood to the religious condition of Israel, to the development of the Old Testament religion, to the historical events, condi-

tions, and relations of the time of their origin, and to the mental peculiarities of the prophets by whom they were uttered, as well as by an examination of their mutual relations to each other,—to understand Messianic prophecy in the Old Testament as an historical phenomenon ; and then only, when we have gained a knowledge of its historical character, can we, by a comparison of the same with New Testament fulfilment, secure a satisfactory reply to our chief question. Accordingly, we shall first communicate the result of our inquiries into the historical character of Messianic prophecy, having regard as may seem necessary to the labours of others.

## FIRST SECTION.

### THE ORIGIN OF MESSIANIC PROPHECY.

#### 1. *Its Source in Revelation.*

N order to understand the nature of an historical phenomenon, we must, first of all, go back to the commencement of its existence. We have therefore here to occupy ourselves with the origin of Messianic prophecy. How did it originate? How did Israel, and especially the prophets, become connected with it? If a rigid and spiritless supernaturalism takes its stand on the answer, "through the revelation of God," or "by the enlightening operation of the Divine Spirit," it certainly expresses a truth, but does not reply to our question. It is a truth, because the Messianic prophecies must naturally have the same origin as is affirmed of the prophetic utterances generally, namely, the operation of the Spirit giving a revelation from God; and in our opinion, it is impossible, without recognising the reality of the revelation, to regard them as historically intelligible. For those who consider the prophets simply as specially wise and good men, who instructed the people in their own religious beliefs and views of truth, and endeavoured to bring them to

bear upon individual and national life, and, to this end, among other means published the fears and hopes by which, partly from their faith in God's righteousness and government of the world, and partly from their patriotism and political sagacity, they were influenced, and who therefore object to every extraordinary operation of the Spirit of God on the minds of the prophets,—for those, Old Testament prophecy in its essential nature will always remain an incomprehensible historical phenomenon. For it is an undeniable fact, and affirmed upon every page of the prophetic writings, that the prophets themselves had the clearest and most profound consciousness that they did not utter their own thoughts, but those revealed to them by God; not their own words, but the words of God put into their hearts and into their mouths by Him. This is indeed the distinction which they make between themselves and false prophets; they were sent of God, and had a distinct commission to communicate His purposes, while others ran without being sent, and prophesied when He had not spoken to them; they spoke rather from the visions of their own minds, הִזִּיזוּן לִבָּם יִדְבְּרוּ לֹא מִפִּי יְהוָה, from the deceit of their own hearts, and in their own words they promulgated divine oracles; in a word, they are נְבִיאֵי מִלְבָּם (Jer. xxiii. 16, 18, 21, 22, 26, 28, 31; Ezek. xiii. 2, 3, 6, 7, 17). Certainly this distinction sprang from the clear consciousness of the genuine prophet, that he, as a faithful servant of his God, always and in everything that he said, had only one end in view, namely, to establish the divine authority in the kingdom and among



the people; while the false prophets, for the promotion of selfish interests, flattered their inclinations and passions (Jer. xxiii. 22). In the general direction of prophetic teaching it was manifest whether or not any one was really called by Jehovah to the prophetic office, and engaged in His service, and honoured by revelations from Him. This distinction could only be made by the real prophets from the clearest consciousness that their predictions were not מִלְבָּם, not the product of their own reflections, wishes, hopes, or fears, but were given to them by God. And what life and energy did this consciousness throw into their addresses! what power it exercised over the men themselves! It is well known to every reader of the prophetic writings, not only how almost every paragraph begins with a "אֵל", "נְאֻם י", or ends with a "יְהוָה דָּבַר", but also how their addresses commonly overflow with God's own words, they themselves speaking in the first person in His name. And not only have they the confident assurance that what they published in His name will certainly happen, but in their belief there was in this published word a divine power which would just as certainly secure its own fulfilment, and that their words, by the natural operation of a hidden law, had in them an ever present operative power (Jer. i. 9, 23, 28; Isa. lv. 11). Upon themselves the consciousness that they had received a direct commission from God exercised such an overwhelming influence, that all personal resistance was in vain (Jer. xx. 7, 9). On the other hand, there was in it a power which fitted them with unyielding courage

to face every danger, and to fulfil their commission though king, princes, priesthood, people, and a host of false prophets were against them (Jer. i. 17, xx. 9). Many other proofs might be adduced to show that the prophets had a clear and immovable conviction that they made known only that which God had communicated to them for the purpose (1). Those who desire to understand Old Testament prophecy historically, can only do justice to this consciousness of the prophets when they recognise it as having an objective foundation, against which they should struggle all the less in the presence of many an occurrence predicted long before, and which lay beyond the limit of human foresight; for example, the destruction of Sennacherib's army "not by the sword of a mighty man," Isa. xxxi. 8. The sceptical may be also pointed to the fact that history itself, with its ever living and convincing testimony, has justified the prophets.

## *2. The Method of Divine Communication.*

We hold, and that most firmly, the doctrine that all predictions were communicated to the prophets by divine revelation; but how little this does towards a reply to the inquiry concerning the origin of Messianic prophecy, will be seen when we ascertain in what, according to their own testimony, these communications generally resulted to the prophets themselves; and in doing so we shall, in harmony with our general design, limit ourselves to the most necessary remarks,

chiefly referring to the discussions of Bertheau and Oehler, but especially to those of the latter (2). With these theologians, we must declare ourselves against those views which find the characteristic of prophetic inspiration to be ecstasy, and suppose that the usual mode of revelation was the vision. The principal representative of this class is Hengstenberg. In the second edition of his *Christology*, his views are considerably modified (3). It is said the prophets did not find themselves at the time of revelation, and when they spoke under the influence of the Spirit, in a condition of unconsciousness, according to the Montanist view; but in the highest degree their state was that described by Steinbeck, when he says, "The inspired not only realized life in a higher degree, but his thoughts were quicker and clearer." Still their condition is said to have been an unusual and extraordinary one; they were in an ecstasy; that is, by a sudden and overpowering operation of the Spirit of God upon their minds, their whole natural life, their perceptions and desires, the impressions of the senses, and the intellectual consciousness—reflection—were in an unusual manner thrown into abeyance, and their inner sense so powerfully excited, that they directly heard or saw what was to be revealed to them. The external senses were quiescent; the intellectual consciousness, the *νοῦς*, was overpowered by the *πνεῦμα*, but in such a way that its activity was heightened and strengthened, and it endeavoured as far as possible to follow the intellectual phenomena in their flight, but ever at a modest dis-

tance behind, failing to raise itself to the height of immediate recognition, and standing mainly in a subordinate relation to the power of the inner perceptions. From this view of the nature of prophetic inspiration, it follows that all prophetic perceptions were seen in vision. In their ecstasy they saw history, and in their addresses they only described what under the influence of the Spirit they had seen. It is on this account that we so often find them suddenly passing from one subject to another, the imagery itself passing in rapid succession before their mental eye. The proof of the correctness of this view, which I have given almost in Hengstenberg's words (4), is found partly in examples of prophetic inspiration of the lowest class, Baalam, Saul, etc.; partly in single ecstatic conditions in which prophets and apostles have found themselves; partly in certain expressions and phrases from the oldest prophetic period, in which the lowest class of prophetic inspiration prevailed, still remaining in use, but in consequence of the development of prophecy no longer to be literally understood; and to some extent in phrases describing rare and extraordinary situations which are applied to the ordinary experience of the prophets, *הָיוֹן, חֲזִיוֹן, רֵאִים, מִרְאָה*, and others of a similar kind. The chief defect of this view is, that it does not distinguish between the various grades and kinds of prophetic inspiration, and therefore cannot meet the real condition of the case. It has been justly remarked, that from the fortieth to the sixty-sixth chapter of Isaiah, and indeed in most of the

predictions of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Micah, and others, there is no trace either of a description of pictures seen in ecstasy, or of "an unusual and extraordinary condition of the prophets themselves." These discourses, though indicating powerful agitation and convulsion of the body, do not indicate sudden seizure by a higher power, but rather a continued divine operation ; an activity heightened by communion with God, in which there was the freest use of human gifts, and the fullest exercise of their own capacities and powers (5). Hengstenberg admits that the eschatological discourses of Christ in Matt. xxiv. and xxv. are very similar to the Messianic predictions of the prophets, in respect to the characteristic peculiarity that both group together, and represent as continuous, events in themselves separated by wide spaces of time : he admits, further, that these discourses are "in nowise of a visionary character," and that "the ecstatic states are nowhere to be found in Christ." What, then, can justify the position that essentially similar predictions of the prophets must have been revealed to them through the instrumentality of visions or the ecstatic state ? And what must have been the mental state of those prophets who prophesied not merely now and then, but to whom prophecy was peculiarly the work of a life, and in which for a long series of years they were constantly engaged ? (Jer. xxv. 3.) In consequence of the continued and almost uninterrupted return of the abnormal state in which the minds of the prophets would be placed by the sudden and overpowering

operation of the Spirit of God, the mental condition of an Isaiah or a Jeremiah must have been wanting in genuine health ! Against the doctrine that ecstasy was the characteristic of prophetic inspiration, we may venture, in presence of the information we derive from the Old Testament, and especially from the prophetic writings, confidently to affirm that the more the condition of prophetic inspiration was one of ecstasy, the lower was it in grade ; ecstatic conditions coming but seldom into its more fully developed and riper manifestation, appearing rather in the earliest times, and at the first call of the prophet to receive divine communications (6).

That ecstatic conditions come within the sphere of genuine prophecy cannot be denied, for both the Old and the New Testaments clearly affirm it. In the lowest kind of ecstasy the person has no longer any control over himself ; the essential functions of personality, self-consciousness, and self-direction are suspended : he has lost his power of recollection, and no longer does what he does by his own choice : he is the unconscious, powerless instrument of the controlling Spirit, and when the ecstasy is over he has no distinct remembrance of his experience. We have examples of such ecstatic states in what is narrated of Saul and his messengers in 1 Sam. xix. 20, and in the *γλώσσαις λαλεῖν* of 1 Cor. xiv. It is evident that these conditions—though for the individual religious life of the ecstasies they might be of great importance, and productive of the most blessed results (1 Cor. xiv. 18)—

are not necessary to revelation ; they are beneath the character of prophecy strictly so called, for the Apostle Paul expressly distinguishes between those who spoke only  $\tau\hat{\omega}$  πνεύματι and not  $\tau\hat{\omega}$  νοῦ, and places the latter above the former, because with them the νοῦς was active, and they were in a position to speak for the edification of the Church (7). There comes now into view another phase of the ecstatic state, in which there is no such suspension of the natural powers by the operation of the Spirit, in which personal activity steps back but is not bound, in which the decisions of the will may be affirmed against the power of the Spirit (1 Cor. xiv. 32). The continuity of self-consciousness is not interrupted though the connection of the mental life with the external world is for a time suspended, and intercourse between self-consciousness and the external world ceases, and the mind with an exceptional activity is entirely occupied in the perception of objects foreign to its sphere of thought (8). In this case, when the ecstasy is over, there remains a more or less clear recollection of what has been seen or heard. Even the ancients have (9) noticed the analogy between the ecstatic state and dreams ; and it is an interesting fact that the latter come before us in the Old Testament itself as the vehicle of divine communications : only in the dream there is a temporary suspension of the relation of the mental life to the external world by the physical condition of the sleeper, while in the ecstasy there is a concentration of the whole inner life upon the perception of objects not existing in the

world of sense, produced by the power of the Spirit. As apostles (Acts x. 9-12 ; 2 Cor. xii. 14), when receiving divine communications, found themselves in this kind of ecstasy, so also did Old Testament prophets, and especially when in supersensuous visions God Himself was presented to their mental eye in sensible form, or when the condition and fate of the people of God were in symbol caused to pass before them. Though many of the visions recorded in the later prophetic writings may be only a fanciful clothing and veiling of the thoughts, and though in other cases, as for example in Ezek. i., xl., xli., and xlii., what the prophets saw in the spirit they may have described more minutely ; this, however, is an undoubted fact, that both ecstasy and visions belong to the early history of the prophets and the dawn of prophecy.

But it is equally certain that in the later periods these two conditions were not the usual and ordinary medium of divine communication. It is only of isolated predictions that the prophets say they had received them in a vision. Isaiah, it is well known, speaks only of a single occurrence of this kind with which his consecration to the prophetic office was connected (Isa. vi.) ; and only in Isa. viii. 11 can we elsewhere find any indication of the ecstatic state. On the other hand, the expressions most in use to designate the mode of revelation, as well as the prominent features of the discourses and predictions of the prophets themselves, point to something less extraordinary and more within the circle of experience as the



means of divine communication. We remember the words, "That which I have heard of the Lord of hosts," and, "I have heard from the Lord God of hosts" (Isa. xxi. 10, xxviii. 22 ; Jer. xlix. 14 ; Ezek. iii. 17 ; Hab. iii. 2) ; also the "שֵׁכֶר", that is, the secret, confidential communication of Jehovah ; etymologically, the thing whispered or suggested, the discourse spoken in a dull or suppressed tone. The name of the prophets is also significant—נְבִיא, one in whom God confides, and to whom He communicates His purposes (10). If we would determine the most usual method of divine revelation to the prophets, we must proceed from those expressions most commonly used, and not from those which are much more rare, as הִזְיוֹן, הִזְיוֹת, and others which have evidently been transferred from the vision to the prophecy. Thus the method of revelation with respect to God is to be described as inward speaking, and in relation to the psychological function of the prophets as an inward perception of His words (11). What signification have we now to give to these expressions ? what ideas to associate with them ? There is this word of God, דְּבַר יְיָ, that is, a word in man (Hab. ii. 1 ; Zech. i. 10, 13, 14, ii. 2-8, iv. 1, 4, 5, v. 5-10, vi. 4 ; Num. xii. 6-8). That man may perceive it, God must awaken (הָעִיר אֹזֶן) or open (פָּתַח, נָלַח אֹזֶן) his ears ; that is, he must arouse into activity his powers of spiritual perception (Isa. l. 4, 5). The prophet then hears the voice of God speaking to him, בִּקְרֹב לִבּוֹ (Ps. xxxvi. 3) (12). God puts His word into his heart in such a way, that if he

makes the attempt to keep it to himself, it is like a burning fire within him (Jer. xx. 9). Thence also the representation that he must as food eat the word of the Lord (Jer. xv. 16 ; Ezek. ii. 8, iii. 3). Following such intimations, we shall certainly not go far wrong if, from this inward voice of God, and the corresponding inward perception of His word, we infer the production in the mind of the prophet, by the operation of the Holy Spirit, of an immediate certainty concerning the will and purposes of God. This certainty does not spring from reflection ; it is not entirely originated in the usual manner from the prophets' own mind, for clearly they are conscious that it is given them of God. As the trusted servant hears from the lips of his master his wishes and intentions, so the prophets receive from the mouth of God a revelation of His will. The whole proceeding does not come within the sphere of subjectivity, but consists in the actual intercourse of the living personal God with the person of the prophet, and as such it is everywhere represented. Nor, on the other hand, is the production of this certainty concerning the divine will associated with the ecstatic state or a condition similar to it. It is true the object of this assurance will often appear before the mind of the prophet in the plastic form of intuition, and all the more as the imagination is aroused to a corresponding activity. By the intense concentration of the soul on this intuition it may arrive at the condition of ecstasy, and through the excitement of the imagination to ecstatic visions. But this is by

no means common. The whole process, mysterious as it is in itself, is not beyond the range of our psychological knowledge. Two analogies from the sphere of our religious experience will serve to bring this matter nearer to our understanding. One is the manner in which we come to certain living convictions of faith, self-evident Christian beliefs. They are not the result of reflection, or, if this is at all found in association with them, it is clearly not the product of man's own mind, but comes rather, in each individual case, from the enlightening operations of the revelation of God ; it results from the immediate inwrought assurance of the Holy Spirit through the so-called *testimonium internum spiritus sancti*. "Flesh and blood," said the Saviour to Peter after he had made the confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,"—"*Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee ; but my Father which is in heaven*" (Matt. xvi. 17, xi. 25). There can be no doubt that the greatest part of the contents of the prophetic discourses are to be traced to an essentially similar method of revelation, especially all those portions intended for the vindication of the will of God as declared in the law, or for the enforcement of the fundamental principles of the Old Testament faith and their application to special circumstances, or for the further development and confirmation of existing religious knowledge. *Within this sphere falls a large proportion of the Messianic prophecies.* The analogy between the mode of communication to the prophets and this inward assurance of saving truths by

the Spirit of God is all the more complete, as in both cases the operation of the Spirit is indissolubly associated with the energy of the spoken or written testimony of God's word as with its correlate. It is well known how often the discourses of the prophets are connected with those of their predecessors, and grow out of them. It may be said that our remarks do not meet the specific character of the prophetic writings; it may be especially pointed out that the Old Testament teacher of wisdom was assured by the Spirit of God concerning religious and moral truth, also that he would desire to communicate to others religious knowledge gained in this way, and to make it practically available; and yet in those writings of the Old Testament which come within the sphere of didactic poetry we nowhere find those emphatic, ever-recurring enforcements of the doctrines, admonitions, and warnings, as spoken by God Himself to the hearer or reader, or those frequent instances of deepening conviction passing into the very words of God, and speaking in His name, which characterize the prophetic discourses and writings (13). This striking difference has its foundation in the fact that the prophet is conscious of a distinct call by which he has been made Jehovah's instrument, the interpreter of His will, the bearer of His communications to His people, and that he has, above others, been entrusted with a definite mission to his contemporaries; while the teacher of wisdom is conscious only of a general call felt by every man who is in the possession of truth not to keep the treasure to himself,

but to make it useful to others. The latter, therefore, does not find himself prompted to his instructions and admonitions by the feeling that the events happening before his eyes demand of him the fulfilment of a *definite duty laid upon him by God*, as is the case with the prophet. Naturally, therefore, will his thoughts be rather the product of his own reflections and the fruit of his experience, and as such will come to his consciousness when the Spirit of God has sealed to him their truth. To the consciousness of the prophet, on the contrary, whatever God has assured to him will, on the ground of his special divine mission, *come as then given him of God* wherewith to fulfil the vocation to which he has been called. Now, if we take this conscious prophetic call into account, those assurances, produced by the direct operation of the Spirit of God and by the *testimoniun internum spiritus sancti*, respecting what in a given case was to be declared as the will of God, would be wholly similar, and would suffice to explain the specific character of the prophetic discourses, so far as their contents are of the nature indicated above (14).

Of course this conscious call to the prophetic office could not be realized with any very extraordinary vividness, unless there fell to their share disclosures which the Spirit of God gave to no other men. Apart from the certain experience that Jehovah gave to them, as His trusty servants, revelations of His counsels, and that they had, beyond all others, a knowledge of the future, a clear consciousness of their divine mission

is hardly conceivable ; still, it is true also that mainly it did not consist in the prognostication of future events, for their discourses would then have lacked the element needed to establish them in the eyes of *their contemporaries* as prophets really sent of God. For this certain knowledge of the divine counsels respecting the future wrought in the mind of the prophet by the Spirit of God, we have an analogy in the sphere of religious experience, an analogy to which Oehler has recently drawn attention (15). It is *the assurance of answered prayer*, especially when thereby it reaches decisions about the affairs of outward life, or things connected with it. Such decisions are not attained by reflection, and certainly do not originate in the human mind. They are produced by the direct operation of the Spirit of God upon the mind of the suppliant, and come to his consciousness as an answer to prayer from the Being to whom he has spoken. The conviction that it is not imaginary, but is an actual occurrence, as real as any event with which he has to do, is just as firm and deep as similar convictions in the mind of the prophet that God has spoken to him. It is well known that in the Psalms, in consequence of the inward perception of an answer to prayer, the most distressing complaints and tearful supplications have often passed into joyful confidence and jubilant songs in praise of the divine goodness, and sometimes in such a remarkable manner, that for the transition to fail of being a parallel to the intrinsic nature of prophecy seems psychologically

conceivable only on the supposition that deliverance from peril, or at least a change for the better, had taken place in the condition of the suppliant (16).

Oehler has pointed out that this analogy is all the more deserving of notice, since, when the prophets received revelations from God, their intercourse with Him is frequently represented as being peculiarly prayerful (Jer. xxxii. 16, xlii. 4; Hab. i.). It is recognised, indeed, as a condition of the bestowment of the revelation (Jer. xxxiii. 3), and we find the expression *אָזְנִי*, to answer, used both of the hearing of prayer and apocalyptic communications (Jer. xxiii. 35-37, xxxiii. 3; Mic. iii. 7; Hab. ii. 2). The gift of prayer is a common, gracious bestowment; but some petitioners have a special anointing, by virtue of which, even during prayer, they frequently know whether they are heard or not, and are often assured of a gracious answer concerning things which have to do with their external life. So also the assurance wrought in the mind of the prophet concerning the divine counsels presupposes a special charisma; but the capacity which in such cases is sanctified and elevated by the communication of the Spirit of God, is that power of presentiment which is undoubtedly possessed by some persons in a very high degree, and which comes nearest to the prophetic charisma when it comes into activity through the power of deep moral convictions (17).

If this is the case with the usual method of divine revelation, it becomes clear to what extent genuine prophecy demanded as a necessary presupposition

a normal moral and religious revelation of the prophet to God (18), and why, as remarked above, the moral and religious nature of a man's actions, who wished to be regarded as a prophet, decided whether he had received a revelation from God, or only pretended to have done so. We can understand also, that in the representation of anything of which the prophet had been assured by the Spirit of God, his own mental peculiarities would be fully seen, for the operations of the Spirit must of necessity correspond with the receptive mind; and we can easily conceive how, in representing that of which the prophet had been assured by the Spirit, his own mental peculiarities must declare themselves in full measure, for the receptive faculty of his mind must necessarily correspond with the operation of the Spirit, in order that the assurance may come ever to his own consciousness; and its communication to others is possible only when he makes it the object of his reproductive activity, through which reflection, imagination, and all mental gifts find expression in the measure and manner which his individuality dictates. In this respect the word of God which he proclaims is also the word of the prophet; that which in its ultimate origin comes not מִלְּבִי, still does so in a certain sense. At length it is clear, then,—and this is chiefly the point in question,—that the new knowledge of the prophet derived from divine revelation, though given directly by the Spirit of God, is yet *never unconnected with that which already exists in his own mind*, but is rather, and that without prejudice to its newness, *brought forth from*



*the prophet's existing mental treasure ; by the operation of the Spirit of God it is organically brought to the light of his consciousness.* For how could the Spirit of God produce a certainty in the mind of the prophet about that which was to him wholly strange and absolutely new, and which he could not recognise in its internal connection and harmony with the general contents of his consciousness ? A knowledge which is not somehow genetically connected with the hitherto existing consciousness, could only be produced in the mind of the prophet by a process of magic, or be placed there by external mechanical agency. But neither the knowledge nor the certainty of God's purposes can be originated in this way. The law which prevails in the sphere of natural life prevails not less in the sphere of spiritual life, namely, the law that in an external, mechanical way nothing can be taken up into the living organism, nor be received into the processes and activities of life. In the former case, as in the latter, it can only happen through the receptive activity of assimilating processes ; and these in our case are possible only when the new knowledge given by the Spirit of God springs not altogether from an external source, but has its roots in the continued consciousness of the prophet, though in its initial existence and at the moment of revelation unknown to him. In this way the organic connection of the knowledge revealed by the energy of the Spirit with the existing contents of the prophetic consciousness may in various degrees be essentially genetic, so that the predicate of new-

ness may be affirmed, now in a lower and now in a higher degree. Objectively considered, it may be simply the unfolding of a germ thought which already lay in the mind of the prophet, only this unfolding is not perfected by means of his own conscious understanding and reason. At the moment of revelation the results come to him, not even as conscious issues of the knowledge already in his possession; and not until afterwards can he perhaps, reckoning, as it were, from the given factor, by reflection come to a clear perception of the connection between the new knowledge and the old. This organic connection may consist also in a reconciliation of contradictions hitherto present in the prophetic consciousness, by means of the newly revealed knowledge; or it may appear as the solution of an enigma, filling up, so to speak, a chasm in the complexity of the prophetic intuitions. Especially if his perceptions were not purely ideal, but concrete historical contents of the future, could they not in their own nature stand in a purely genetic indicative relation, in the way of logical development, to the knowledge already existing in the prophet's mind. Wherever a special prophetic charisma, resting on the foundation of the power of presentiment, is prominently active, there may be affirmed of it in a higher sense the quality of newness. But even such knowledge can only be received into the consciousness of the prophet in a manner corresponding with the laws of the human mind. It will never, therefore, come into the existing contents in any external manner, but must so spring

out of the same that the new growth shall draw its necessary nourishment through many minute vessels from the parent stem. As a whole, such knowledge will be new, but in its individual features it will betray a genetic connection with that which existed before in the consciousness of the prophet.

The view thus taken of the nature and law of spiritual life seems to be the only one honourable to God. It would certainly be an unwarrantable representation of Him, to suppose that the result of His revelation to the prophet was such that it was in his mind as a dead and lifeless possession. No! The Spirit of God is not always beginning His work afresh. He gives Himself rather to the work of developing the germs of already existing truth, and through the mutual influence which, by virtue of their own vital power, they exercise upon each other in the course of development to evoke new truths; and this it seems to us is the only method of revelation worthy of God (19).

### *3. The Organic Genetic Connection of Prophecy with the Fundamental Ideas of the Old Testament Religion.*

From what has been said, it appears that the question about the origin of Messianic prophecy is truly and perfectly answered when it is accurately pointed out how it originates psychologically, *how it comes to have its roots in the general consciousness of the prophets, and is educed from the same according to the laws of organic development.* If the inquiry has refer-

ence to any single Messianic prediction, there would come then under consideration not only what the prophet, as a man who stood on the high places of the religious development of his times, had received into his consciousness by virtue of his acquaintance with the law, with the history of his nation, with the predictions of his predecessors, and the laws of the kingdom of God; but also his knowledge of the then existing position and relations of things, his observations and experiences among his own people, his knowledge of the history of the world around him, and the political relations of his times. With the reply to the inquiry into the origin of Messianic prophecy *generally*, there comes under review, of *necessity*, only the consideration that the prophets above all others were those who had "the law of their God in their hearts" (Ps. xxxvii. 31; Isa. li. 7; Deut. xxx. 14); or to express it otherwise, they above others were the supporters and representatives of the religion of Israel. And though the essential contents of Messianic prophecy are in some recognised measure not the concrete historical future, but ideal in character, yet will the organic connection of revealed knowledge with the religious knowledge already existing in the consciousness of the prophet, objectively considered, be purely genetic; that is, the revealed knowledge will far outweigh the simple germs which, though they have not been fully unfolded by the conscious understanding and reason of the prophet, already exist. It will thus be seen that Messianic hopes and predictions might and did necessarily spring from the inmost life of the

divinely revealed religion of the Old Testament dispensation. In the very nature of this religion we find the ground for those hopeful prospects and constant aspirations toward an ultimate state of exaltation and honour foreordained in the immutable counsels of God to be enjoyed in "the end of the days," which are so characteristic of it, and which make it, among all the religions of ancient times, the religion of hope.

In general, it may now be said that this ground lies in the idealism of the Old Testament religion ; that is, by divine revelation ideas were planted in the minds of the people of Israel, so lofty, and rich, and deep, that in the existing religious condition they could never see their perfect realization ; ideas which, with every step in the development of the religious life and knowledge, only more fully disclosed their own depth and fulness, and which must therefore necessarily have led them to look to the future for their fulfilment. The more vividly a pious Israelite realized the contrast between the idea and the reality,—and who would be more deeply conscious of this than the prophets, distinguished as they were by the intensity of their religious life and the wealth and purity of their religious knowledge ?—the more their faith, and hopes, and desires looked to the future abolition of this contrast, and the complete realization of the idea. The most powerful of these ideas, from which Messianic knowledge has sprung, we have now to look at more closely. There are three which demand our special attention : the idea of *the Covenant*, the immediately connected idea of *the King-*

*dom of God*, and, as a germ for Messianic prophecy in its narrower sense, the idea of *the Theocracy*.

(1.) *The Idea of the Covenant.*

The idea of the covenant is fundamental in the religion of the Old Testament (20). It is the centre of unity to the faith and religious knowledge of the people of Israel. As Creator of the world, God intended to enter into covenant with Israel ; His purpose was indicated when the finished work of creation was crowned by the sanctification of the seventh day ; for the essential idea of the Sabbath is, that on it, as a holy day, the covenant of Israel, the holy people with the holy God, was consummated (21). From the beginning to the end, God conducted the government of the world as the covenant God, with a view to the manifestation of His purposes of mercy towards Israel. This is the ground-thought both of the history and prophecy of the Old Testament writings, and especially does it prevail in the history of the origin of the human race and in the lives of the patriarchs. By the gradual separation of Israel from other nations, by the call of Abraham, and the conclusion with him of a covenant of promise, and by the entire history of the patriarchs, was the way prepared for the carrying out of Jehovah's purpose, and the completion of the covenant in the setting up of the kingdom of God in Canaan. This separation between the history of men generally and the history of the patriarchs is pointed out by Noah, when he

expressly distinguishes Jehovah as the God of Shem, Gen. ix. 26 ; and also by the repeated promises given to Abraham and the other patriarchs, especially that recorded in Gen. xvii. 7 ; and at length the covenant is concluded by the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, and the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, Ex. vi. 2, xix. 4-6, xxiv. 3-8. After this we find the idea of the covenant very commonly expressed in the words, that Jehovah will be a God to Israel, and that Israel shall be to Him a people (Gen. xvii. 7 ; Ex. vi. 7, xix. 5, xxix. 45 ; Lev. xi. 45, xxii. 33, xxv. 38, xxvi. 12, 45 ; Num. xx. 41 ; Deut. iv. 20, vii. 6, xiv. 2, xxvi. 18, xxvii. 9, xxviii. 9, xxix. 12) (22). What do these expressions contain ?

When the Lord says, "I will be a God to you," He is not speaking of the obligation of Israel to worship Him as the God of the nation. In none of the passages quoted will the words bear this sense ; in every one of them we have the language of promise (23). It is affirmed that Jehovah, the one true and invisible God, as Creator of the heavens and the earth, is Lord of nature and of history ; that what He is as God in the majesty of His holy and glorious being, and in the fulness of His grace and truth, He will manifest to the people of Israel for their salvation. To this people He will make known, for the good of the whole world, that He is the living God, the God of salvation, from whom comes all blessing, all help, all deliverance, the God who will enter into loving communion and intercourse with the creatures made

in His own image. In a special sense He was the God of the Israelites; as such He had declared Himself in delivering them from Egypt, and that deliverance was to Israel the initial revelation of his Godhead. After that, the people knew that Jehovah was God, and that they were to be separated from the nations to be a holy and a peculiar people. Most of the above-cited passages might be mentioned in proof; in addition to these, the reader may refer to 2 Sam. vii. 23, 1 Chron. xvii. 21, and the frequently recurring declaration of Jehovah, "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage" (Ex. xx. 2; Lev. xix. 36). Throughout the Old Testament the deliverance of Israel from Egypt is regarded as the historical declaration of their election. In the religious consciousness of Israel, it takes essentially the same position as in our Christian consciousness is assigned to the deliverance accomplished for us by Christ Jesus (24). It was the commencement of God's gracious relation to Israel. The design which He had in view in bringing them up out of Egypt was first declared when, on the ground of the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, He took up His abode in their midst (Ex. xxix. 45; Lev. xxvi. 11; Ezek. xxxvii. 27); and its permanence was shown when, after He had given them the Holy Land, He set up His kingdom among them, continuously to manifest to them His majesty and condescending grace. His gracious presence He proved by blessing the land with great fruitfulness, by enabling its inhabitants to dwell in



peace, secure from the attacks of beasts of prey and human foes, by giving them victory over all their enemies, and greatly increasing their numbers (Lev. xxvi. 3-10 ; Deut. vii. 13, xi. 10-13, ii. 25, xi. 24, 25, vii. 21, ix. 3, xx. 3, 4). All these temporal blessings had their higher spiritual signification, inasmuch as they were pledges of the ever present grace of God. Israel was near to Him ; He could be consulted in seasons of difficulty ; they could hear His word, see the revelation of His power and grace, and were heard by Him when they called upon Him, and in this way were distinguished above all the nations of the earth (Ex. xxxiii. 16 ; Deut. iv. 7). As their King, He gave them the most righteous laws and maxims (Isa. xxxiii. 22 ; Deut. iv. 8 ; Isa. xlii. 21) ; and as a Judge He dispensed justice in their midst through His chosen instruments, under the guidance of His Holy Spirit (Isa. lxiii. 11 ; Hag. ii. 5).

On the other hand, as God's peculiar treasure, Israel is a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Ex. xix. 4-6). Only as the Holy One could He enter into the covenant ; and in all His relations with Israel He protects the speciality of His nature, His glorious majesty, and His spotless purity. His people must therefore come out from the nations that serve false gods, and dwell apart from them (Num. xxiii. 9). The essential difference between Jehovah and other gods, and His opposition to all idolatry, must find its earthly counterpart in the difference between Israel and all other people ; and as God is separate and independent, so must they be

placed wholly under the forming influence of the divine power. Therefore, as the Sanctifier, Jehovah sets Israel apart to be a holy people (Ex. xxxi. 13 ; Lev. xx. 8, xxi. 8, xxii. 16, 32 ; Ezek. xx. 12, xxxvii. 28 ; compare also Lev. xx. 26), and under the sanctifying influence of His presence among them they are to abide for ever. It was their duty to hold themselves apart as much as possible from everything that would dishonour the covenant God who dwelt among them ; from personal uncleanness (Lev. xi. 44, xx. 26, xxi. 8), and from moral pollution (Lev. xix. 2 ; Amos ii. 7). Not only were they to be holy in a negative sense, but, from the consideration that God was holy, they were urged to positive purity ; this was the great end of the law (Lev. xix. 2), which in its essential nature is a revelation of the moral purity of God in the form of commands, and its aim was so to mould the national life of Israel, that there might be seen in it more and more of the divine holiness, and that in the fullest sense they should become a holy people. It was only as such they could come near to God and realize the honours and privileges of a nation of priests (25).

But the continuance of this relation is dependent on Israel's hearkening to the voice of the Lord and keeping His commandments (Ex. xix. 5), for on the giving of the law the covenant itself was founded (Ex. xxiv. 8). Otherwise, Jehovah cannot show Himself as the God of their salvation. In case of a departure from their steadfastness and a breach of the covenant, they must expect the withdrawment of the promised blessings,

and the infliction of a series of heavy penalties, ending in their dispersion among the heathen; for the closer relation into which He entered with Israel involves the consequence that their neglect of His glory and profanation of His holy name would be met with greater displeasure than in the case of any other nation (Lev. x. 3; Josh. xxiv. 19, 20; Amos iii. 2).

Still, the choice once made was not to be abrogated on account of Israel's unfaithfulness and the necessary consequent punishment; the promise which God had made to the fathers was not to be annulled on account of the guilt of one or more generations; and the gracious purposes for the manifestation of which He had chosen Israel were still to be carried out, for God is not a man that He should repent (1 Sam. xv. 29). "Hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" (Num. xxiii. 19.) Though man may be unstable and changeable in his conduct towards God, there is no change in Him (Mal. iii. 6), and nothing that He has purposed can ever become impracticable on account of the conduct of His creatures; He will certainly find ways and means for the fulfilment of His promises. If His displeasure must turn against Israel, the fulfilment of the covenant may be suspended, but it can never be abolished, for He cannot cast off His chosen people for ever (Lev. xxvi. 44, 45; 1 Sam. xii. 22; 2 Kings xiii. 23). He cannot allow the sentence of destruction to go forth against them as against the heathen, in view of the covenant into which He Himself has entered with them, and the

promise which He swore unto their fathers, in virtue of which they are and remain His peculiar people. The sentence against them must be one of chastisement, with the loving design of bringing them back to Himself (Jer. x. 24, 25, xlv. 28; Ps. lxix. 28, 29); and this design He will know how to accomplish (Lev. xxvi. 40; Deut. xxx. 1-6). Their stiffnecked resistance may give way before the power of chastisement, or it may be overcome by the softening, subduing influence of the memory of His favour (Ezek. xvi. 61-63, xx. 43, xxxvi. 31). When this condition has been reached, or even while it is being reached, the covenant once more comes into operation. God reveals Himself to Israel, and delivers and honours her. That this should be the result, is demanded by His truth (Ex. xxxii. 11-14), by His holiness, and by His righteousness; by His holiness, because the punishment of Israel consisted in her subjection to heathen nations, and it seemed as if human power could prevail against the kingdom of God and hinder the carrying out of His purposes, and appeared to furnish a ground for the supposition of the heathen, that the God of Israel was powerless to protect His inheritance, or that He was changeable as men, and no longer cared for it. Had He left His people in the hands of the heathen, His glorious majesty and His mighty power would have been discredited, and His holy name dishonoured; therefore His honour demanded that He should take back His inheritance, and for the sake of His holy name deliver His people. In the protection and security of

Israel, and in the punishment of His enemies, must His holiness be vindicated before all peoples (Num. xiv. 13-20; Deut. ix. 26-29; Ezek. xx. 41, xxxviii. 16, 23; Isa. xlviii. 9-11, lii. 5, 6). His righteousness also demanded that, as soon as the design of chastisement was answered, and they returned to Him, He should deliver them from the oppression of the heathen; for, according to the most common conception, His righteousness is that attribute of His character by virtue of which He always adheres in His dealings with men to the straight course prescribed on the one hand by the good pleasure of His will, and on the other by the well-being of His people. His conduct, therefore, towards them, while in harmony with His purpose that the wicked should be subdued and the good be raised to honour, must, to express His righteousness, always be in accordance with His covenant relations; and as soon as they ceased to resist His will, His righteousness demanded that they should be restored to His favour. That which in one aspect of it is grace in its widest sense, is from another point of view righteousness, as may be seen from Hos. ii. 21, Ps. ciii. 17, and many other passages, in which, with special reference to the people of Israel, the צְדָקָה is united with the חֶסֶד or the אֱמֻנָה, or stands in parallelism, as in Ps. xxxiii. 5, xxxvi. 5, 6, xl. 10, 11, lxxxix. 15, xcvi. 13, cxvi. 5, cxlv. 17. In like manner the deliverance of Israel from the power of the heathen is represented as a fruit of His judicial righteousness; for in comparison with her heathen oppressors Israel is relatively righteous,

as far as her people worshipped the only true God ; and though the number might be small, such worshippers were always the strength of the kingdom (1 Kings xix. 18). As the righteous Judge, God could not permit the wicked to destroy men more righteous than themselves (Heb. i. 13). As in His government He avenges the good for the violent deeds and deceptive wiles of the wicked (Ps. xxxi. 1, lxxi. 2, cxxix 4), He must, by delivering the Israelites from their oppressors, help them to that justice against idolaters which, as a people worshipping the only true God, they might expect (Isa. xl. 66, xli. 10-16).

We have thus, as far as was necessary for our purpose, given the contents of the idea of the covenant. It is therefore easy to see how Messianic prophecy, in the wider sense of the words, must necessarily have been unfolded from it. It must have sprung from the difference between the idea and the existing reality which obtained on account of Israel's unfaithfulness,—a difference which would come with increasing power to the consciousness of the pious and enlightened Israelite in proportion to the development of religious knowledge and the intensifying of religious life. The first portion of this statement needs no further remark, for it is obvious from the mere idea of the covenant that in seasons of apostasy, when suffering from present or threatened judgments, the gaze of all in whose hearts the Old Testament faith still lived must have been fixed upon the better times of the future, in which God's gracious purposes concerning Israel should be

fully realized. However great the apostasy, however severe the punishment, the election of Israel, the unchanging faithfulness of God, His holiness and His justice remained always the firm anchor of the hope that there would be at last a day of deliverance, in which the nation would enjoy the full blessings of the covenant.

The other point requires a closer consideration. With the progress of religious knowledge and the development of religious life, the feeling that the idea of the covenant had received but a very imperfect fulfilment in the kingdom of God, as founded by Moses, must have become stronger. There appeared before the eyes of the people of Israel a position from which they were yet far distant, but which, in virtue of the purpose of God, they were destined ultimately to reach.

In the tabernacle and in the temple God dwelt in their midst, revealed Himself to them in word and deed, and guided them by His Spirit. They were a nation of priests, and stood near to God by intercourse and fellowship with Him. But as there was a visible divine kingdom founded upon the natural basis of the Israelitish State, the membership of which was given to Israel after the flesh, this common relation was for the people on the whole an external one, bound up with the mediation of the Levitical priesthood. The idea that they were a nation of priests had for the individual only a very limited application. Circumcision and the fringes on their garments (Num. xv. 37-41) were for every Israelite the external signs of his relation to God and of his priestly character: every

year, at the renewal of the covenant in the feast of the Passover, he exercised his priestly calling ; on Sabbaths and festivals he came near to the Most High, especially on the three great feasts, when every male appeared before the Lord, and, partaking of the peace-offering, thankfully rejoiced in the external perfection of his fellowship with God. But he only ventured into the outer court of the dwelling-place of Jehovah ; from the Holy Place itself he was excluded. Only at a reverential distance was he permitted to worship at the throne of the Most Holy God, and by the penalty of death was forbidden in any stricter sense to fulfil the priestly functions. The bearers of the priestly office strictly so called, the mediatorial representatives of the people, were chosen by God Himself ; the sons of Aaron, in virtue of their election to the priesthood, were holy in a higher sense ; they belonged to God, and possessed the privilege of approaching Him ; and through them alone could the offerings of the people be presented. Of this class one only had the right to enter into the Holy of Holies, and this privilege was confined to one day in the year ; and then he must not enter without the atoning blood, which he was to offer for his own sins and those of the people. Thus in the very arrangements, according to which the external intercourse of Israel with God was carried on, they were constantly reminded that the covenant was incomplete. Their fellowship with God in the temple service was only the representation of the communion of the heart ; and the external forms of the church into



which every Israelite was born were only to represent a more spiritual service. It was intended, by the instrumentality of the law and by means of specially appointed organs, more fully to make known the will and purpose of God. But in how small a measure was this prospect realized! Notwithstanding all the demands and threatenings of the law, we see the repeated apostasy of the nation. In spite of all the prophetic discourses, we see the constant sinking of the divine service into empty ceremony, performed in an undevout, worldly, and carnal spirit. Only a few came into sincere, spiritual intercourse with God; and these few had against them the great and powerful secular party. It is self-evident that every pious man who had the law of his God in his heart (Ps. xxxvii. 31; Isa. li. 7), and his delight in the illuminating, gladdening, and quickening commandments of Jehovah; that every one who from personal inward experience knew how the God of grace and salvation could guide the solitary by His Holy Spirit (Ps. li. 12, 13, cxliii. 10), how inwardly near His mercies were, how He heard them and answered when they called upon Him, and what a blessing it was to be able to call God their portion,—that every pious man who realized this inward communion with God must have seen what sort of a fulfilment of the idea of the covenant was most essential. And it lies in the nature of the case, that the sharper the contrast between the little company of the truly pious and the men of worldly views, the more completely would the inner devotion introduce a division

into the Old Testament economy. In the minds of the pious, the merely carnal and external fulfilment of the covenant would, in importance and worth, constantly give way before a sense of the value of spiritual communion with God. They felt that in existing conditions and relations, when so many had forgotten Him, and gave themselves no concern about His commandments, it could not be said, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people," and that only when the whole nation was brought into a living fellowship with Him could this promise be really fulfilled. With a vital faith in Israel's election, with love to their fellow-countrymen, to God and His kingdom, they were compelled to await the future, when the gracious purposes of Jehovah toward the nation would, by means of the enlightening, sanctifying operation of the Spirit of God, be accomplished, and the covenant brought to its full completion.

But these pious Israelites were not without much trying experience in their own spiritual relations with God. The divine displeasure which overtook the nation was deeply felt by them for other reasons than love to their own people. It was to them a disturbance of their own personal relations with the Most High. The conviction that they themselves were in a state of grace was based ultimately upon the consciousness that Israel was chosen of God, and every suspension of the covenant with the nation must have more or less disturbed the certainty of their own position. Hence the painful complaints which we hear during

times of exile, that God had cast off His people ; complaints which show that in the hearts of the good there was a deep sense of being forsaken of Him. Their happiness was, however, more seriously disturbed by their own sins, and increasingly so as their knowledge of the will of God extended ; for the obligations imposed upon them by the covenant seemed to become greater, and thus their consciousness of guilt became deeper. They could not, since the intensifying of the religious life during the prophetic period, attain to a firm and joyful assurance of the forgiveness of sin by means of the Old Testament sin-offering, but only by faith in the sin-forgiving grace of God (Ps. xxxii.). Both the law and the prophets proclaimed to them "the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin" (Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7 ; Num. xiv. 18 (26) ; Isa. i. 18, lv. 7 ; Mic. vii. 18).

But this sin-forgiving grace had not yet been manifested in a really efficient manner. Faith had not yet found in it for all cases a firm foundation ; and when in times of trial and doubt the necessity was felt of falling back upon such a support, it was found only in the election of Israel and the history of the past ; and the deeper the consciousness of sin, the less this foundation sufficed. The certainty of forgiveness was therefore neither perfect nor continuous. In many humble souls the desire often remained unsatisfied, and so the pious of the Old Testament, for the sake of their own relations with God, desired and hoped for such a fulfil-

ment of the covenant as would blot out their sins, and by the powerful and permanent influence of the Spirit of God on their hearts, preserve them from any new interruption of their joy in God and fellowship with Him.

And this was the very design with which God had chosen Israel, and He would surely, according to His covenant promise, reveal His Godhead and become their deliverer. With the knowledge of the need of salvation the knowledge of God as a Saviour increased, and there was a clearer insight into the purposes of grace and the plan of His kingdom. With ever increasing distinctness must the devout men of the old covenant have perceived that, if Jehovah was really to be a God to Israel, and Israel in the fullest sense His people, there must be a revelation of His glory far surpassing everything in the past; a new manifestation of grace and mercy removing the obstacle to a full and lasting covenant, and blotting out sin perfectly and for ever by the exercise of His forgiving grace. They must have had a growing conviction that God would one day take up His abode among His people in an entirely different and much more glorious manner, so that they would be truly near Him, and enjoy the priestly privilege of enjoying immediate intercourse with Him, and beholding His glory. That this might come to pass, He Himself must circumcise the hearts of the people (Deut. xxx. 6), and put His law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts (Jer. xxxi. 33); He must give them a new heart and a new spirit,—His Spirit,—and so influence them that they would walk

in His commandments (Jer. xxxii. 39; Ezek. xi. 19, 20, xxxvi. 26, 27).

Nowhere, not even in the priesthood, was there such an immediate and powerful work of the Spirit of God upon men, such a heartfelt personal confidence in Him, and such living and constant communion with Him, as among the prophets (Amos iii. 7). To the Israelite, and especially to the prophets, this was a striking illustration of that to which the nation would one day attain. The people of God are what they should become, and the idea of the covenant is fully realized when the Spirit of God is no longer poured upon special individuals, but upon the whole people; when all should be prophets, all disciples of Jehovah, and all governed by His Spirit. "Would God," says Moses, in that remarkable narrative recorded in Num. xi. 16-30, "that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them!" (Joel ii. 28, 29; Ezek. xxxix. 29; Isa. liv. 13.) This conception of the condition to which Israel should ultimately attain led to the idea, that in virtue of its election the nation was destined to fulfil the same divine vocation towards mankind generally as the prophets had done towards their own people, and that one day, armed with the power of the Holy Spirit, the nation, as the trusted servant of Jehovah, would make known the word of the Lord; an idea which confessedly is laid down with wonderful clearness, and in a variety of aspects, in the predictions of "the great unknown" (Isa. xl. 66). We have here nothing more to add. It has been, we

think, satisfactorily shown that the fundamental idea of the Old Testament religion, the idea of the covenant, has been a vigorous and powerful germ of Messianic prophecy, and that on the one side present or coming judgments, and on the other growth in religious knowledge and the deepening of religious life, especially the sense of the need of salvation, have developed from this germ the expectation of a new and more glorious revelation of divine grace, by which in the end of the days He would lead His chosen people to their ultimate destiny.

(2.) *The Idea of the Kingdom of God.*

Let us now proceed to a consideration of the second and closely-connected idea, which we regard as one of the principal germs of Messianic prophecy, namely, that of the kingdom of God. Jehovah is the King of His people; as in the sphere of nature all is subject to His will, so in the kingdom He set up amongst the Israelites His will was to be the law. All the relations of His subjects with each other were regulated by Him, and by Him all ordinances were confirmed; and every one was required, in obedience to his God and King, to hold them sacred. In His kingdom, right was not to be put down by force and cunning intrigue. Order and peace were not to be disturbed, nor was injustice or iniquity to be permitted. It was to be a kingdom of righteousness—a kingdom in which truth and love were to unite (Ps. lxxxv. 10, 11). That it should be

and remain so was the design of the kingly government of God. As King, He was in a special manner also Judge (Deut. x. 17, 18; Ps. xevi. 10, lxxxix. 14, xcvii. 2); and as with human kings, so He was largely engaged in the discharge of magisterial functions; and He gave Himself to the work of administering the ordinances of justice and sustaining the authority of law. He was ready to protect all, and especially the poor and the destitute, in their rights, to limit all force to the sphere of equity, to render the wicked harmless by the frustration of their plans and the punishment of their deeds, and to root out the incorrigible from His kingdom. But here also the idea differs in a most striking manner from the reality. It is well known how frequently the prophets denounce the unjust and avaricious violence of the powerful, and the corruption of the judges; how frequently in the Psalms the distressed have to cry to God for help and defence against their powerful persecutors; how frequently in that kingdom, which was to be a kingdom of righteousness, the wicked have all power in their own hands; how those who are "quiet in the land" (Ps. xxxv. 20) often find, by painful experience, that the kingdom of God is far from being a kingdom of peace; and how, in truth, the kingdom of God and His righteousness is but little visible. Naturally hope would turn to a period when transgressors could no longer disturb the laws and interrupt the peace of the divine kingdom. How natural the confident expectation that Jehovah Himself would one day, in the most decided manner, undertake

the government of His people, and protect them from the wicked, and make His kingdom what, according to His idea, it should be! (Isa. xxiv. 23, lii. 7; Mic. iv. 7.)

Still more important is the difference between the idea and the reality, as seen in the character of the kingdom itself. It was national, confined to the narrow limits of Canaan, and to the chosen people of Israel. There only was Jehovah known and worshipped, and there alone, even in better times, was His royal will obeyed; and, at the most, the influence of His reign extended, in a limited measure, to some of the neighbouring tributary states. Yet Jehovah the God of Israel is the only true God, and all the gods of the surrounding nations are vanity (Deut. iv. 35, 39, xxxii. 39, etc.). To Him alone, therefore, belonged all honour and glory; to Him every knee should bow, and every tongue swear (Isa. xlv. 23). Israel's King, as Creator of the heavens and the earth, is King and Lord of the world (Josh. iii. 11, 13; Ps. xlvii. 7; Ex. xix. 5; Ps. xxiv. 1), the God of gods and Lord of lords (Deut. x. 17); therefore all nations should serve Him, and keep His commandments. And as His kingdom embraced the whole earth, so also does His judicial authority (Gen. xviii. 25): the "earth," the "world," the "nations," are frequently represented as the sphere of His righteous judgments (27). Therefore the ordinances of His kingdom should prevail throughout the earth, and everywhere secure to the nations righteousness and peace. On the ground of his knowledge of



Jehovah must the Israelite claim the whole earth for the kingdom of his God. From the beginning there existed a power to rise above the exclusiveness of Old Testament religion, namely, the vital germ of knowledge, that the kingdom of God would one day find its completion in a universal monarchy embracing all people. The unfolding of this germ might indeed be hindered through the influence exercised upon religious knowledge by the national form of the existing kingdom, and the attitude of antagonism in which Israel stood towards other nations; but by the progress of divine truth its vigour necessarily increased, until the veil of exclusiveness burst open, and it sent forth the shoots and flowers of the Messianic prediction, that in "the end of the days" all nations should fear the Lord and submit to His laws, and that the influence of His government should be such that wars should terminate, and the whole earth become a kingdom of peace (28). This was all the more sure to happen when the Israelite came to a full and clear consciousness of the unity of the human race. Although, of necessity, he considered the heathen world as forgotten of God (Ps. ix. 17) on account of its abominations, תועבת, and its polluted worship of loathsome idols, שִׁקְצִים (Isa. xxxv. 8; Ezra vi. 31, ix. 11); deserving of His destroying indignation, and in *massa perditionis*,—still his faith in the one God, who bestows upon all nations life and breath, preserved Him from making any essential difference in the human family. And thus, as is well known, both narratives of the creation place one human pair at the

beginning of the history of the race. Eve bears her name as the mother of all living (Gen. iii. 20) ; and all the nations which were known to Israel when Gen. x. was written, are traced to the three sons of Noah. If this had reference to natural origin only, the representation would be without special importance ; but the reference is much more a moral and religious one, and the most essential thing in it is the idea that all men, without distinction of tribe or nation, owe their existence to one and the same divine purpose, to the same creative act, and that therefore what is noble in human nature and akin to God—the divine image—the authority to rule over the earth, and to enter into loving communion with God, is common to all. The Old Testament bears witness distinctly enough to the religious meaning of the representation in question, when, for example, in Gen. v. 3—comp. with v. 1—it is expressly stated that in the first procreation of the race the image of God is perpetuated,—evidently intending to fix attention on the fact that all men, from the first, are descended from him who bore the divine likeness ; or when, in Gen. ix. 5, the sanctity of human life is based on the doctrine that man is created in the divine image ; or when, as a motive for kindness to the poor and the lowly, the consanguinity of all men and their common origin is presented (Isa. lviii. 7 ; Prov. xiv. 31, xvii. 5 ; Job xxxi. 15) (29). If the historical representation of the descent of all men from a single pair has this spiritual meaning, it was not far to the conclusion that one day all mankind would arrive at the know-

ledge of God, serve Him in His kingdom, and live in communion with Him; especially as only in this way that could be reached which the Scriptures everywhere represent as the great end of the creation and continuance of the world, namely, the divine glory.

The idea of the covenant did not leave Israel without a clue to the solution of the question, *how the kingdom of God was to be made to embrace the whole earth*. How, indeed, could the one living God reveal Himself to Israel without fixing upon Himself the attention of idolatrous nations? How could the government of God, in carrying out His purposes concerning Israel, be so administered that Assyria with its plans of conquest is only an instrument in His hand (Isa. x. 5, 15); the mighty Nebuchadnezzar only His "servant" (Jer. xxv. 9, xxvii. 6, xliii. 10), through whom He brings upon Israel the long-threatened punishment; or Cyrus, His "shepherd," His "anointed," the man "executing His counsel" (Isa. xlv. 1, xlv. 11), whom He has raised up for the sake of His people, that by the judgments brought upon the Chaldæans their promised deliverance might be accomplished, without fixing the attention of the nations upon what He was doing for Israel? This result of His dealings with the Jews is distinctly pointed out even in the Pentateuch. "As true as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord; because all those men," etc. (Num. xiv. 21, 22) (30). It is here stated, not only that, according to the divine will, His glory should be known to the whole world, but that His displeasure should rest upon the generation

which had been brought out of Egypt, and had seen His glory, and yet had despised Him. And, according to other passages, the gracious revelation of Himself is intended to answer a similar end as the manifestation of His justice. There is the well-known assurance which, according to the sense, reads, "In thee, or in thy seed, all the nations of the earth shall bless themselves" (Gen. xii. 3, xviii. 18, xxii. 18, xxviii. 14). For, according to the interpretation confirmed by the parallel passages, Jer. xlvi. 20, Ps. lxxii. 17 (compare also Deut. xxix. 18; Isa. lxxv. 16; Jer. iv. 2; and the opposite, Num. v. 21; Isa. lxxv. 15; Jer. xxix. 22; Zech. viii. 13; Ps. cii. 9), and now generally received, at least for those passages in which *Hithpael* is used, the prediction means, that all nations seeking happiness for themselves will desire the blessings enjoyed by the patriarchs and their posterity; or more precisely, there is *this* in the words, that all nations will see in the Israelites "the blessed of the Lord," and will be constrained to recognise the favoured people as alone blessed of God, the true God, and that His abounding grace will attract their attention, and will stir up in them a desire to share in the same blessings (31). The idea that the judgments of God, and especially the manifestations of His mercy and delivering power in relation to Israel, must fill the nations with wonder and fear, is more frequently expressed in other parts of the Old Testament than in the Pentateuch, and particularly in the prophets. Indeed, this is the peculiarity, the ground-thought of

prophecy. How should recent deeds of mercy, in which God displayed the fulness of His glory and delivering power before the eyes of all nations, not produce upon them such an overwhelming impression as to convince them of their idolatries and of Jehovah's supremacy, and so lead to the extension of His kingdom to the whole earth?

How, from the idea of the covenant, there beamed forth another light in aid of Israel's perception of her prophetic call, and recognition of the human instrumentality through which the nations were to be led into the kingdom of God, has been already shown.

In this kingdom, when perfected, nothing that falls within the conception of evil can have place; for evil, according to the Old Testament teaching, exists in the world as a consequence and condemnation of sin. It is the immediate result of sin, that God in displeasure hides His face; but in "the end of the days," when by full forgiveness it is for ever blotted out, and when, by the inscription of the law upon the hearts of men, they are kept from repeating their apostasy, the power of God, delivering from evil and bringing salvation and life, must be manifested in full measure. Everything connected with sin, and the consequent evil of the divine judgments, must vanish, and the peace and blessedness of the original paradisaical state be restored. Hence pictures of the first estate of the world and humanity are often found in Messianic predictions: no more sickness (Isa. xxxiii. 24); patriarchal years (Isa. lxx. 20; Zech. viii. 4); peace among the nations and in the animal world, and

between the latter and men (Isa. xi. 6-9, lxv. 25). The Holy Land is to be like the garden of Eden (Ezek. xxxvi. 35) through the going forth from the habitation of God of a river teeming with blessing, healing even the waters of the Dead Sea, and bearing on its banks trees of life, whose never-failing fruits should serve for food, and their unfading leaves for medicine (Ezek. xlvii. 1-12); and lastly, there is the destruction of death, and the cessation of all weeping (Isa. xxv. 8, xxvi. 19; Dan. xii. 2, 3). It may be further observed, that as God in His judgments usually revealed Himself as the Lord of nature, and caused it to suffer on man's account, and for the sake of His kingdom; so also it has a share in the history and the perfection of the kingdom of God, and is associated with the full revelation of His glory in creation. The great catastrophe bound up with the last judgment, which will destroy the world, will end in its renewal and glorification, and the result is said to be "new heavens and a new earth" (Isa. xxx. 36, lxv. 17, lxvi. 22).

In conclusion, it may be expressly remarked, that the expectation of these events necessarily resulted in a separation of the idea of the kingdom from the existing nation, and must have paved the way for the recognition of the fact, that the perfected kingdom of God would be of an essentially different character, one in which the full covenant relation would be realized in the spiritual and personal fellowship of every individual with God,—a relation which, from its very nature, cannot be confined within any geographical limits.

It is said that all flesh shall at every new moon and on every Sabbath come to the city of God to worship Him (Isa. lxvi. 23); but, on the other hand, we read that "men shall worship Him, every one from his place; even all the isles of the heathen" (Zeph. ii. 11); and thus through the thin veil of Old Testament notions there gleams forth the idea of a spiritual and heavenly kingdom.

### (3.) *The Idea of the Theocracy.*

Fruitful germs of various features of Messianic prophecy lay in all the institutions of the Old Testament kingdom; for in these, as well as in the rules of life prescribed for the Jewish people, there were at the bottom ideas which originated on the one side from the religious necessities of the human heart, and on the other from the eternal law founded in the divine nature, by which all communion of the Holy One with sinful men must be controlled. But the form in which these ideas were represented and expounded was necessarily fixed by the external character of the divine kingdom. The regulations and ordinances of the Old Testament covenant could afford no real satisfaction to the religious yearnings of the human heart, and could only express very imperfectly the eternal law. At the same time, the deepening of the religious life must have aroused the expectation that the same would one day come to a more perfect expression of its idea, or that by other arrangements

God would amend it. This was especially the case with the institution of sacrifice. During the prophetic period, many pious Israelites had come to feel how little the sacrifice of animals could atone for sin; and in like manner they saw that the washings and frequent purifications ordained by the law were equally powerless to produce any moral result. Hence the conviction that in some other manner God would make provision for the absolution of His people (Ezek. xxxvi. 25-38; Zech. xiii. 1).

But among all the germs of Messianic prophecy found in Old Testament institutions, there is none so important as that which involves the theocratic kingdom; for from it Messianic prophecy, in the narrower sense of the words, has sprung. With the idea of the theocratic kingdom we have therefore now to occupy ourselves (32). In addition to the accounts we have of the establishment of the kingdom, and the giving of its laws, and the predictions concerning it in 2 Sam. vii. and various other places, information is given by a number of the Psalms, among which Ps. ii., xx., xxi., xlv., lxxii., lxxxix., and cx. are most important (33).

In the State as founded by Moses there was no human king. The idea that Jehovah Himself carried on the government of His people, and that all authority belonged to Him alone, was most strictly carried out. Certainly He made use of human instruments. Moses, his successor Joshua, and the judges whom He raised up in times of danger, were leaders of His people; but



there belonged to them neither lordly authority nor kingly rights; these throughout belonged to God, and their position was simply that of the commissioners of the Divine King, who, in the discharge of their duties, were entirely dependent upon Him. As in subsequent times the general took his place at the head of the army without detriment to the kingly authority, so these men stood at the head of the nation without independent power or royal rights. Their honours were therefore not hereditary, and there might be seasons when there was no human leader. So with the prophets. They were extraordinary instruments of the Divine King, and were "raised up" when the position of the people demanded extraordinary aid. In the establishment of a human kingdom as a permanent institution, there was an evident descent from the ideal height of the Mosaic kingdom of God, a degradation and alienation of the divine State. The idea of the kingdom of Jehovah had not so much power over contemporary nations, that for its maintenance an occasional influential and spirited vindication of it by men raised up of God would suffice. In consequence of the politico-religious position in which the people actually found themselves, the maintenance and consolidation of the divine State had to be sought instead, by the spiritual power of the idea acting through the external institution of a fixed human government. In this lay great danger. The position and fortunes of the State were much dependent upon the disposition and conduct of him who was in posses-

sion of the government ; a dependence which, from the nature of the case, did not exist in equal measure in those personally called and extraordinary organs of the Divine King, nor, so far as it did exist, could it so easily prove itself dangerous. There also lay therein a certain opposition to the authority of Jehovah, a depreciation of His direct government and peculiar right to His people and country, in favour of pure mediation, which, as with the idea of a divine State, would naturally seem incompatible ; for the human king presents himself as the visible possessor of sovereign authority, having power over land and people. It will not therefore appear strange, that, according to one of the two accounts of the origin of the kingdom (1 Sam. viii. 10–18, xi. 15 ; see also chap. xii.), Samuel, on the ground of the incompatibility of the human kingdom with the divine, after long resistance and by special divine direction, at length gratified the desire of the people to have a king, at the same time recognising in the desire a grievous sin against God, and a rejection of Him as the ruler of the kingdom. Certainly this representation of the subject has historical truth ; it expresses what might have been expected of Samuel. It could not be otherwise, than that the view of a human kingdom, which we find held by Gideon in the time of the judges (viii. 23), should be his, and that he should reluctantly surrender the idea of a divine State in its ancient form. And since the idea of the kingdom had no root in the national consciousness, but originated in the observation of the

power it gave to heathen neighbours, the judgment of Samuel respecting the demand of the people could be no other than that which is recorded.

But there is another side to this. A human kingdom was in no way really incompatible with a divine State. It depended upon realizing the *greatest possible union*; so that the authority and rights of Jehovah should be the same as those of the king, and that the king's should be identical with those of the invisible ruler. Then would the new institution no longer seem strange in the organism of the divine State, but *would present itself as an indigenous growth*. And when, by the establishment of the human, the divine kingdom lost much of its ideal character, it would gain in that external consolidation which was demanded by the actual condition of the national life. In the times of the judges, it had been felt that security and independence—a closer union of the various tribes, and a satisfactory cultivation of national life in harmony with the will of Jehovah—could only be attained by a powerful and united leadership of the people. From the embodiment of the idea of the kingdom of God in a permanent external institution, compensation might be expected for what the idea itself had lost in power, through the religious enervation of the national spirit. Indeed, it lay in the path of historical development already marked out by the establishment of a special priesthood; it corresponded so completely to the character of the Israelitish religion in its earliest Mosaic form, that the idea of a divine

kingdom was able to make itself practically felt only in the form of a permanent external institution. The idea being thus embodied, one might expect the speedy fulfilment of a want in the existing organism ; a fulfilment necessary for its continuance and development, and from the beginning included in divine arrangements (Gen. xvii. 6, 16, xxxv. 11), namely, that the king himself should receive his calling, and be appointed to his office. This we have in the other account of the origin of the kingdom (1 Sam. ix. 10, 16), according to which Samuel, as a prophet commissioned by God, apart from all popular pressure, himself called the new institution into existence. Nor will historical criticism venture to thrust this report aside as unhistorical. The representations of the two accounts differ so much, that those who confine their attention to the sharply expressed external outline find only contradiction, while those who penetrate deeper must acknowledge their historic truth. What could justify us in the belief that the great prophet Samuel uniformly and absolutely condemned the human kingdom ; that he was blind to that which the actual condition of the people required, and which lay in the path of the historical development of the sacred commonwealth ; or that the idea of a human kingdom, corresponding to the kingdom of God, was altogether strange to him ?

But though the idea of a human kingdom forming a unity in the organism of the theocracy could not be entirely strange to Samuel, we find that during

the government of Saul, whose rule was autocratic rather than theocratic, and represented the unreconciled opposition of the human government to the divine rather than the unity of the two, and with which, in the person of Samuel and the prophets, it soon came into sharp conflict, that idea took no root in the national mind, and had no further growth. This could only happen when David, a man after God's own heart (1 Sam. xiii. 14), sat on the throne, and the human kingdom entered into its true relation to the order of prophets, the other organ of the theocracy as required by the idea of the kingdom of God. The divine purpose concerning the inheritance of the kingdom was then for the first time proclaimed (2 Sam. vii.). The choice of David and his posterity henceforth associated the idea of the theocratic kingdom with his house. With the lapse of time, it became more and more manifest what wealth the idea of a human kingdom in close association with the kingdom of God enclosed within it, and what fruitful germs of knowledge of the divine purposes were implanted with it in the consciousness of Israel. Let us now see what it contained. We may, without hesitation, include in our review the sayings of later Old Testament writers concerning the kingdom, as far as they are developments of the germ idea present from the beginning.

The ground-thought, by means of which the idea of the closest possible union of the human kingdom and the kingdom of Jehovah came within the Israelitish

consciousness was, that the theocratic king, as “the Lord’s anointed” (Ps. lxxxix. 20), the chosen of God (Hos. viii. 4; Deut. xvii. 15; 1 Sam. x. 24, xvi. 8, 10; 2 Sam. vi. 21; 1 Kings viii. 16, xi. 34; Ps. lxxviii. 70), appointed in His house and kingdom (1 Chron. xvii. 14), was *the visible representative of the invisible King*. As God’s vicegerent on earth, he is the human instrument through whom Jehovah carries on His government. His authority is not only an authority by God’s grace, but also in God’s stead; not only do his honours and kingly splendours come from God, but he is the earthly image of His majesty and glory (Ps. xxi. 6, xlv. 4, xevi. 6, civ. 1, cxi. 3). On the ground of this idea of the relation between the earthly and the heavenly kings, and in order to give full expression to the unity of the theocratic government, they are often mentioned conjointly (Prov. xxiv. 21; Hos. iii. 5; 1 Sam. xii. 3, 5). For the same reason, the covenant which the high priest Jehoiada made with Jehovah on the one side, and the king and the people on the other, that the latter should be the Lord’s, is said to be a covenant between the king and the people (2 Kings xi. 17). To resist the king is to resist Jehovah Himself (Ps. ii. 2; Prov. xxiv. 21; Isa. viii. 6). Later, we find it expressly stated that the king “sits upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord,” and even “on the throne of the Lord” (1 Chron. xxviii. 5, xxix. 23). We need not wonder, therefore, when the poets of the earlier times use similar expressions,—as, for instance, in Ps. xlv. 7,

where the throne of the king is called the throne of God (34); or in Ps. cx. 1, where God says to the king, "Sit thou on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool;" but even in these there is, strictly speaking, less expressed than in the above quotations, so far as they ascribe to the king (35) the first rank and the highest honour after God (1 Kings ii. 19; Ps. xlv. 10, 13; Matt. xx. 20-23),—the *participation* with Him in the highest degree of His government, but not representation of the invisible King Himself. His being the chosen medium of the divine government, raises him to an entirely peculiar and intimate relation with God, which finds expression when it is said that Jehovah is his father, and that he is His son. To him alone, not to priests, nor to prophets, nor to any other individual Israelite, are such terms applied. The peculiar people, as a whole, are indeed thus distinguished in virtue of their election; and as Israel among the nations stood in a singular relation to God, so did the theocratic king among the Israelites. The general sonship of the nation had its climax in his personal sonship, in a similar manner as the sanctity and priestly character of the nation culminated in the person of the high priest. God is father to the king when He regards him with special parental care and love, as a holy and inviolable person (1 Sam. xxiv. 6, 11, xxvi. 9-12; 2 Sam. i. 14), takes him under His guardianship, and exercises over him all the care of a father; while the king, as His son, trusts in Him and renders the obedience of a child (2 Sam. vii. 14; 1 Chron.

xxii. 10-12, xxviii. 6 ; Ps. lxxxix. 27-34). But if the king fails in his obedience, he is to be chastened, yet not utterly cast off. As, for Abraham's sake, God has never permitted a decree of destruction to go forth against Israel ; so, for David's sake, will He not withdraw His favour from the king, nor permit his house to be desolate (2 Sam. vii. 14, 15 ; Ps. lxxxix. 29)<sup>(36)</sup> ; and as the relation of God to Israel implies that He, as her Creator, has made her an independent people, and chosen her for Himself (Deut. xxxii. 6 ; Isa. xliii. 1, 15, xlv. 11), so His distinction as Father of the theocratic king involves the doctrine that his kingdom originates with Him, and that the earthly sovereign is the depositary of Jehovah's kingly power (Ps. ii. 6) <sup>(37)</sup>.

As the instrument by which God carried on His government, the theocratic king had to defend the kingdom against the attacks of the heathen, and to maintain its authority and power abroad, that so the people of God might live in security and peace, and take a becoming position amongst the nations of the earth. He delivered them from the power of their enemies (1 Sam. ix. 16 ; 2 Sam. iii. 18) ; he executed the sentence which Jehovah pronounced upon those who unjustly attacked them (1 Sam. xv.), and led generally the battles of the Lord (1 Sam. xxv. 28). For the exercise of this calling he was qualified by the almighty power of God. Jehovah girded him with strength, made him courageous and skilful in battle, and gave him success in all his undertakings (Ps. xviii. 29-43 ; 2 Kings xviii. 7). He Himself



sustained him by the saving strength of His right hand (Ps. xx. 6). His hand is continually with him, and His arm strengthens him. He scatters his foes before him (Ps. lxxxix. 22, 29), and makes his enemies his footstool (Ps. cx. 1); and in the strength of his God, the king subdues or destroys all the enemies of the kingdom (Ps. ii. 8, 9, xxi. 9-12, xlv. 5, 6).

In like manner he executes the commands of the invisible King with regard to the internal affairs of the kingdom; by his magisterial activity the authority of the law is sustained; he punishes every deflection from the divine will, breaks the power of the lawless, and helps the poor and the needy to their rights,—thus preserving order and peace, and becoming to the land like a refreshing rain. Under his government the righteous flourish (Ps. lxxii. 1-7, 12-15; Prov. xvi. 12-15, xx. 8-26). His duty is to see that the people remain faithful to God, and honour and serve Him. He is to suppress and punish idolatry, necromancy, and worship in high places (1 Sam. xxviii. 3, 9; 2 Kings xviii. 4-6, xxiii. 4-8), and generally to take the chief oversight of the arrangements for divine worship (2 Sam. vi. 2; 2 Kings xii. 4). And for this portion of his duties he is fitted by special gifts; as, for instance, Solomon was prepared for the discharge of the responsibilities of his office by wisdom given from above (1 Kings iii. 4-12; 2 Sam. xiv. 17, 20, xix. 27). In virtue of the performance of these kingly duties, in war and in peace, at home and abroad, he was *the mediator through whom Jehovah dispensed help, safety, and blessing.*

It is self-evident that the contents of the idea of the theocracy, as hitherto unfolded, rest upon the supposition that the king was disposed, as the representative of the invisible Ruler must be, to cherish towards that Being, to whom he was indebted for all his honours, the profoundest reverence (2 Sam. vi. 21, 22), confident trust, and joyful gratitude for His aid (Ps. xxi. 2, 8); that he would love righteousness and hate iniquity (Ps. xlv. 5, 7); and that, like God Himself, he would permit no wicked person near him nor among his servants, but devote himself earnestly to sustain the law, that the kingdom should become what it was intended to be, a kingdom of righteousness and peace (Ps. ci.); in a word, that by *a willing and perfect obedience, his will should be one with that of the invisible King*. The will of God was made known to him partly by the law (Ps. xviii. 23; 2 Kings xi. 12; Deut. xvii. 18) and partly through the prophets, by whom also, if he was disobedient, his sin was reproved and punishment threatened. But the ideal king was one who was so guided by the Spirit of God, and so fitted thereby for His service, that from within he was led to do what was pleasing in His sight (1 Sam. x. 6-9, xvi. 13).

Seeing that the theocratic king is the representative of Him whose power extends over all the earth, and who is one day to be recognised as the God and King of all nations, it is a necessary consequence that he should be the first and greatest of the kings of the earth (Ps. lxxxix. 28), and *possess unlimited*

*authority.* One day all kings will pay Him homage ; He must reign from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth, for God is ready to give Him what, as His Son, of right belongs to Him ; and what the Almighty wills, He fails not to accomplish (Ps. ii. 8, lxxii. 8–11, lxxxix. 27, xviii. 43–45 ; 2 Chron. xxxii. 23) (28). As the throne of God endures for ever, so also the throne of the theocratic kingdom upon which He sits is eternal, and, through David, is promised to Him for ever ; not, of course, in the sense that the life of any individual king was to be indefinitely prolonged, though, in hyperbolical language, even this is affirmed of him (Ps. xxi. 5), but in the sense that the *kingdom should belong to his house through all time* (2 Sam. vii. 12–16, 29 ; 1 Kings ix. 5 ; 1 Chron. xxviii. 4 ; Ps. lxxxix. 29), in the same manner as the priesthood of Aaron and his sons is to endure for ever (Ex. xl. 15 ; Num. xxv. 13).

We have hitherto considered the earthly king as the representative of the invisible Ruler. But, on the other hand, standing as he did at the head of the people, he *was their natural representative before God*, in a similar manner as he was before the surrounding nations ; and as Israel was a kingdom of priests (Ex. xix. 6), he in whom the nation culminated must possess the highest priestly honours. The history testifies that the kings considered themselves as possessing the highest dignities of the priesthood, though they were not entitled to exercise the older privileges of the house of Aaron, and engage in the duties of

the sanctuary, as we may learn from the resistance offered to Uzziah (2 Chron. xxvi. 16–21). Evidently, on the occasion of bringing the ark to Jerusalem, David not only wore priestly garments (2 Sam. vi. 14 ; 1 Sam. xxii. 18), but he dispensed priestly blessings (2 Sam. vi. 16–20), and considered himself entitled to transfer the high-priesthood to Zadok and Abiathar. We find also that Solomon communicated the priestly blessing (1 Kings viii. 14, 55), ordained religious festivals (1 Kings viii. 65), and deposed and set up high priests (1 Kings ii. 26, 27). That to the king belonged the general superintendence of all religious affairs, has already been remarked. The circumstance of Uzziah's incense implies that to him really belonged a special priestly function ; and we find, indeed, that, as head of the nation and representative before God, his sins were visited upon the people (2 Sam. xxi. 1–3 ; 2 Kings xxiii. 26, 27, xxiv. 3, 4), just as the sins of the high priest and the priesthood generally kindled the anger of the Lord against the whole nation (Lev. x. 6). We cannot therefore be surprised when we read, in Ps. cx. 4, that the Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, that *he is a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek*. That this refers to the existing king, is all the more certain from the words “after the order of Melchizedek,” which show that the special rights and privileges of the Aaronic high priest—the offering of sacrifice—are not intended ; for of Melchizedek the tradition is, that he blessed Abram, and received tithes of him, not that he offered

sacrifices: it ascribes to him only the priestly acts which are recorded of David and Solomon.

Such is the idea of the theocratic kingdom. It evidently includes such lofty representations, and arouses such glorious hopes, that here also the historical reality remains far behind. In the earlier times of the kingdom of the house of David, when there sat on the throne theocratically disposed and powerful regents, such as David, Solomon, Abia, Asa, Jehoshaphat, one could, indeed, overlooking the division of the kingdom, feel somewhat satisfied with the measure in which the idea was realized. In those times, and even later, when kings of a similar character adorned the throne, poets could express what was contained in the idea of the theocratic kingdom from what they saw in the reigning monarchs, and by that means more fully develop the idea and bring it home to the consciousness of the people; for it is in the nature of all poetry to rise above the level of empiric realities, with their imperfections and faults, and to represent the subject as it appears to their inspired eye, transfigured and glorified by their conception of it (39). It was natural that, while the recollection of the government of David and Solomon was still fresh, those who found a great contrast between the former times and their own should fix their gaze upon the splendour and magnificence of the past. Indeed, the further this Augustan age receded, the more frequently would the glaring disparity be felt; when the adherents of the pure religion of

Jehovah were succeeded by a race of unfaithful, unjust, and weak kings, the more perfectly did the poetry of the Psalms bring to light the theocratic idea in all its splendour, and the more fully were the hopes of pious Israelites directed to the future (40). They must have felt increasingly certain that the true ruler of the kingdom of God had not yet appeared, but was to be expected in "the end of the days," when the divine kingdom should be perfected. In this way, from the idea of the theocratic kingdom, was originated *the prediction of the Messianic King*, who—for the idea was indissolubly associated with the house of David—is described as a branch from the stem of David, and as a perfect human instrument through whom the invisible King would carry on the government of His people. All the greatness of the future Messiah predicted by Isaiah and Micah is but the unfolding of the truth contained in the germ idea of the theocratic kingdom. With these prophets it reached its full development; the feature of priestly honours appeared more distinctly in the later representation of the Messianic King (Jer. xxx. 21; Zech. iv. 6).

As we have shown that the general contents of Messianic prophecy are to be regarded as organically unfolded from germs which the Old Testament religion originally contained within itself, so we find that in the individual features of Messianic passages there is no new knowledge which is not in organic genetic connection with that which already existed, and which the Spirit of God has not psychologically originated in

the mind of the prophet, nowhere anything which in its origin was not conditioned and limited by the power of the Old Testament faith. In this we feel assured that we do not mistake the truth, that no prophecy ever came by the will of man, but that holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Pet. i. 21). The objective reality of revelation is not prejudiced by the doctrine that the operations of the Divine Spirit are carried on in harmony with the laws of the human spirit; neither will it be injured by a full recognition of the conditioning and limiting influences which the existing contents of the prophetic consciousness exercised upon the truth revealed. Without the continued revealing and enlightening activity of the Spirit of God, the development of Messianic prophecy from the Old Testament faith would not have been possible. No plant can ever spring from the seed unless there are present the external conditions of development; and yet the growth is organic, from the inward to the outward. So prophecy does not come into existence without the revealing activity of the Holy Spirit. It is unfolded from within, from that which already existed in the mind of the prophet. And though there are given only simple developments of the knowledge germs contained in the Old Testament faith, the prophetic consciousness is so quickened that these developments take place, not by the activity of the prophet's understanding and reason, but by the special operation of the Spirit of God, who carries it far beyond the common human

historical development of the religious consciousness of Israel, gives it beforehand its direction and aim, and so secures it against being involved in the confusions, delays, and retrogressions never wanting in the course of history. Only those who have lost faith in the living God can suppose that what is the product of historical development cannot at the same time be the product of the constant stimulating, deciding, personal influence of the omnipotent Jehovah. On the other hand, those who know Him, and recognise the truth that He holds the reins of this world's government, will, in the unfolding of religious truth, see the revealing power of Him who alone can dispel our darkness.



## SECOND SECTION.

### THE HISTORICAL CHARACTER OF MESSIANIC PROPHECY.



MESSIANIC prophecy forms an *essential part* of the utterances of the prophets. It was their mission so to influence the people, that they should become in reality what God, in His gracious choice of them, designed them to be—a people in close fellowship with Himself, a holy nation of priests consecrated to Jehovah. For this it was necessary that faith in the divinely ordained and splendid destiny of Israel should be brought into victorious antagonism with present humiliation, and that the consciousness of a great future should be kept alive among the people, and more fully developed. No prophet, therefore, neglected to point to the ultimate design of Jehovah. Amos, for example, though he appears before the people chiefly as the herald of coming judgments, must at least call the attention of the devout and the penitent to the alluring prospect of happiness in the perfect times; and so we find generally, even in the shortest prophetic writings, a proportion of Messianic prediction.

VARIETY IN THE FORM OF MESSIANIC PROPHECY,  
AND THE REASON OF IT.

The most common and essential features of Messianic prophecy remain always, and with all the prophets, the same. The judgments of God upon His faithless people, for their chastisement and reformation, and the turning of at least a remnant of them to Himself; His displeasure against the heathen, into whose hands Israel was given, but who, in their arrogance and design to destroy the kingdom of God, stepped beyond their power; His deliverance of His people, and at length the spiritual salvation and external prosperity of the completed covenant, with the presence of God in their midst, producing by His government the prevalence of righteousness and peace,—are everywhere the outlines of the representation given of the course of the history of God's kingdom. The detail of the picture differs according to the prophet and the times in which he lived. At one time there enters into the picture of Messianic salvation external, earthly happiness, the power and authority of the people of God, their safety from their enemies, the wonderful fruitfulness of the Holy Land; and at another, spiritual deliverance, the forgiveness of sins, the moral and religious regeneration of the people by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the vital, loving communion of every individual with God. Here, these blessings are confined to the people of God; there, the prospect is opened to all nations. One prophet

ascribes the salvation of the last times to Jehovah, another associates the dawn of the Messianic era with the advent of the Messianic king, and a third attributes it to the instrumentality of the true followers of God, which He has used to accomplish the purposes of His grace. Now, His perfected kingdom appears as one answering to the existing Old Testament dominion, and, like it, has in the temple at Jerusalem its chief sanctuary, its special priesthood, its service of sacrifice, and its sin-offering; then, it is pictured as different, inasmuch as special theocratic offices will be superfluous, its membership will be changed, and the mode of worship altered. But much more frequently does Messianic prediction take the form of a change in concrete historical conditions. Israel will be secured from all attack, the oppressive yoke of Assyria will be broken, the Chaldean power will be destroyed, the people of God will return from banishment, Jerusalem and the temple will be re-built, and then the promised season of prosperity will begin. Almost every picture of the Messianic times has its own peculiar colouring.

This variety in the form of Messianic predictions is partly due to the *mental peculiarities* and particular religious position of the various prophets themselves, and partly to the gradual progress of revelation; but in much greater measure to the limiting influence of *historical conditions upon the contents of the prophecies of each individual*.

The first point requires no special exposition. It cannot be doubted that, in the sphere of Messianic

prophecy, varieties of character, talents, disposition, and experience of individual prophets, would be displayed in the style of their discourses, the choice of imagery, in the predominance of the word-revelation or of the vision, in the natural simplicity or in the startling play of symbols, in the plain, homely representation of what they saw, or in the artistic detailed description, and in the now wider and now narrower circle of vision. But we have spoken of their various religious positions, and may venture a word of explanation. We do not mean such a variety as would be prejudicial to unity of spirit. All the prophets bear substantially the same testimony, and all aim at the same end; but, without infringing upon their spiritual unity, we may remark that *the position of individual prophets in relation to the law* and the institutions of the Old Testament kingdom was various. They all had their standpoint not outside or above the law, but in the very midst of it, and were filled with its spirit; but with this position, common to all, there was a possible difference in their estimate of the bearing of the law. The external forms might have for one a greater, and for another less importance. So we find, and especially with the elder prophets, that the outward form was wholly disregarded, while the moral and religious spirit was considered all-important. We do not find a word in the writings of Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Micah to indicate that they ascribed to the ceremonial law religious significance and binding force. But how different was it with Ezekiel! Such passages as Ezek. iv. 14, 22, 26, show how important to him

was the law about meats and divers washings. And that this is not to be ascribed to the later age in which he lived, but rather to the individual religious standpoint of the prophet, seems evident if we consider his contemporary Jeremiah, who, though he has, in common with him, a profound regard for the law of the Sabbath (Jer. xvii. 19-27, with which compare Ezek. xx. 12-24, xxii. 8), otherwise occupies the same position towards the ceremonial law as the elder prophets. That such a difference in religious feeling must have made itself visible in the contents of Messianic predictions, is evident from our remarks on the method of divine revelation. Even if the eternal truth of the new covenant had nowhere stood out from the Old Testament veil, still to the prophets, who more than others attached importance to Old Testament principles and institutions, that veil must have been self-evident in a high degree. And so we find that it really is, with Ezekiel, for example. His contemporary Jeremiah, it may be remarked by the way, does indeed, in his representations of Messianic times, think of the temple, the priests, and the sacrifices (Jer. xvii. 26, xxxi. 14, xxxiii. 11, xviii. 21, 22); but his predictions end in showing us a kingdom of the future, and more perfect times, in which there is no ark of the covenant, no law written on tables of stone, no inaccessible holy places, no distinction between priests and people, but in which God is present in every part of the sacred city, and the law is in every heart, and all stand in equal nearness to Him, and are equally

acquainted with Him (Jer. iii. 16, 17, xxxi. 29–34). Nothing distinguishes Ezekiel's Messianic predictions so much as the fact that he cannot embody the inner religious life of the Messianic times except in the old forms. The picture drawn by him of the future is essentially that of the Old Testament kingdom, with many of its arrangements changed; therefore to him the regulations of the new condition of things are so important as to receive a detailed description (Ezek. xl.–xlviii.). We read that in the new temple sin-offerings will still be presented (Ezek. xl. 39, xlii. 13, xlv. 29, xlv. 20); that on the first and seventh day of the first month there will be an annual cleansing of the sanctuary (Ezek. xlv. 18–20); that the distinction between priests and people will be more marked than before (Ezek. xlv. 19); the ordinances of the ceremonial law concerning the holy and the unholy, the clean and the unclean, will remain in force; the people will, as usual, be instructed in the same by the priests (Ezek. xlv. 23); and circumcision of the heart will be associated with circumcision of the flesh (Ezek. xlv. 9). In a word, the character of the Messianic times does not consist in all old things passing away from the kingdom of God, and all things becoming new; but in the filling of old forms with the Spirit, without which they are dead and worthless, that so the thing signified may always be associated with the symbol, and the ceremony ever be the expression of the heart. There cannot be a doubt that Ezekiel utters his predictions more exclusively from a priestly standpoint than Jere-

miah, and it is obvious that the ceremonial law had for him the greatest importance. In like manner it might be shown, from other examples, how the greater or less depth of the religious life, and the amount of religious knowledge peculiar to any single prophet, exercised a decided influence on the contents of his predictions. In order to see this in a most striking manner, it is only necessary to compare the latter portion of Isaiah's prophecies with those of Haggai or Malachi.

The second ground of variety in the form of Messianic prophecy, namely, the gradual progress of the revelation of God's purposes, would require a continuous history for its elucidation. We should have to point out how the true character of the kingdom of God, and the means of its perfection, were more and more clearly and perfectly recognised in the times of the prophets. But we cannot give here an expository history of Messianic prophecy, and the remarks to which we must limit ourselves will be better expressed in connection with the discussion on the third point—the limiting and controlling influence exercised upon Messianic prophecy by contemporary historical circumstances. The progressive development of Messianic prophecy stands in genetic and teleological connection with the course of the history of the Old Testament kingdom of God; in genetic connection, because of the influence of historical relations just mentioned; in teleological connection, because history, as much as prophecy, was preparing and educating Israel for its destiny, and for the reception of the Messianic bless-

ings. History and prophecy worked together for the same end, ran parallel with each other, and took equal steps. So, also, a review of the effect which the change of historical relations had on the contents of Messianic prophecy, will necessarily contain many remarks on the gradual progress of knowledge with respect to the divine counsels. This is our purpose, and we now proceed to make the *historical character of Messianic prophecy* the subject of our inquiry. To that end we fix our attention, first, on the prominent historic features in the representations of Messianic times, and then proceed to consider the more hidden genetic connection between the history and the contents of Messianic predictions.

1. *The Historical Colouring of Messianic Prophecy.*

With respect to the remarkable historic colouring of all Messianic prophecy, we might content ourselves with referring to Bertheau's exposition (1). But since, for a knowledge of the real historical character of prophecy, nothing is so important as a correct judgment concerning its concrete historical features, we will not altogether avoid the discussion though nothing essentially new may be added.

(a) *The Historical Colouring of Messianic Prophecy  
founded in its Design.*

Above all, the prophet is entrusted with a divine mission to his *contemporaries*. For them all his pre-



dictions are immediately intended, and that not for the satisfaction of an idle curiosity which would gladly lift the veil which hides the future, but rather for the fulfilment of those moral and religious obligations which were demanded of the prophet by the events and circumstances of the times. These he ever kept in view, even when predicting the future; they were his starting-point, and to them his prophecies have a decided reference. It does not at all militate against this view, that frequently the design of prophecy, and especially of written prophecy, was, that its fulfilment should be recognised when it came to pass. The occurring events may have long been foretold by Jehovah, and may be but the fulfilment of His long-cherished purpose. Such examples we frequently meet with in Isa. xl.—lxvi., viii. 1-8, xxx. 8-11, xxxiv. 16, Hab. ii. 2, 3. It is evident that a prediction of future events is also designed for the future, and equally so that a prophet who, on account of the obduracy of his contemporaries, finds no entrance for the word of God, may write it out for a more receptive generation; but this does not stand in the way of its having an immediate relation to present events and to the prophet's contemporaries. They never prophesied without the intention of exercising a decided influence upon the inner life and outward relations of the men to whom they addressed themselves. What may be affirmed of prophecy in general, may be affirmed of *Messianic prophecy in particular*. Its immediate design was the comfort and admonition of contemporaries in the historical circumstances then

transpiring. It was intended to awaken and strengthen the belief that, notwithstanding the apostasy and hard-heartedness of the nation bringing necessary punishments, and the power of the external enemies of the kingdom of God, the gracious purposes of Jehovah concerning His people would ultimately be realized, and that even the events then happening, and those about to transpire, however little human eyes were able to see it, were a part of the way along which a faithful covenant God was leading His people to the blessings He had promised. In order to fulfil this its nearest aim, *the Messianic predictions of blessing to the people of God must always be in close relation to the religious condition and outward situation in which the nation found itself, as well as to approaching calamitous dispensations.* Whenever, therefore, their circumstances were essentially changed, a corresponding change was required in the general features of Messianic prophecy. For this reason, the later prophets never repeated in form the predictions left them by their predecessors; but rather holding fast the main thoughts in the freest manner, and with reference to the historical position of their own times and its practical requirements, they painted a new picture of the perfect future, retaining only such features as, notwithstanding changed conditions, were still significant. Thus Messianic prophecy always remained fresh and vigorous; it was ever renewing its youth, and was to the faithful in every change a source of consolation; it strengthened their faith, and preserved them from the attacks of doubt

and despair ; and by those bright and happy prospects which, in the circumstances, were best adapted to win the heart, it secured the allegiance of *all those who were not* absolutely unimpressible.

*(b) The Historical Colouring found in its Origin, especially in the Limitation of the Prophetic Foresight.*

That which is evident from the design of Messianic prophecy, has an equally sure foundation in the psychological laws according to which it is originated. It is not the free choice of the prophet, in view of the practical question, that he brings the Messianic salvation into near relation with the circumstances of his times ; he rather follows an inward necessity. He cannot do otherwise, since his predictions come into his heart and mouth through the Divine Spirit, as, on the one hand, they are organically developed from his knowledge of God, of His will and purposes, and, on the other, from his acquaintance with the historical occurrences of his age, from observation and experience amongst his contemporaries, and from his knowledge of the events of general history, and the national relations of his times.

That we may further explain and establish the above statement, we must fix our eye upon *the limits placed to the view of the prophets into the future*. That, generally speaking, there are such limits no one denies ; but the particular kind of limit is disputed, and will be, so long as the traditional and the historical view concern-

ing the date of certain prophecies stand one against the other. Certainly the controversy relates to a proportionably small part of the prophetic writings. We have a considerable number of the prophecies of Isaiah, the genuineness of which is generally acknowledged. The same may be said of nearly the whole book of Jeremiah and the whole book of Ezekiel; so also of the writings of the prophets Hosea, Amos, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Malachi, and the first eight chapters of Zechariah. The differences of opinion respecting the date of individual prophecies are unimportant with reference to the reply to our inquiry. Should not this undisputed ground give us a sphere sufficiently wide for the acquisition of a well-founded knowledge of the historical character of prophecy, and the rules and laws by which God, in His communications to the prophets, has bound Himself? And shall we need, when this knowledge is achieved, to recognise unique exceptions from the rule in order to vindicate the prophecies of Isaiah xl.-lxvi. and the apocalypse of the exiled prophet Daniel? (2). We might, perhaps, admit the possibility of such exceptions, if with the predictions, on account of which the exceptions are made, there did not fall into the scale an *entirely different class* of critical reasons against the traditional view of the date of their origin, referring them to a period which is no sooner accepted than they appear like the other predictions, bearing the same historical character, and subject to the same laws. This coincidence makes us suspicious in admitting ex-

ceptions; and an obligation is laid upon us to consider the limits of prophetic foresight, and the rules and laws of divine communications, which present themselves to us from the study of the proportionately large number of genuine prophecies as generally valid.

What are these limits and laws? In the prophetic foresight we have *to distinguish between two different elements*. The one is more ideal and general, the other is of a more concrete historical nature. The germs, from which the first grows into definite prophetic knowledge, are partly the fundamental ideas of the Old Testament religion already present in the consciousness of the prophet, and partly the recognition of certain general relations common to all times. On the other hand, those recognitions which form the second element of prophetic foresight have their germ in the acquaintance of the prophet with the special historical features of his own age.

From the fundamental law of revelation, and from the earlier divine manifestations, every prophet knew the unchanging purpose of God to maintain His kingdom upon the earth by the punishment of transgressors, by manifestations of His grace and truth to the righteous and to those penitently returning to Him, and by discoveries of His almighty power and sacred majesty to the heathen nations who endeavoured to frustrate His designs. They knew that He intended to establish His authority for the salvation of Israel and for a blessing to all nations. *The foresight of each prophet reached, therefore, to the end of the purpose of God.* It is true

that the historical destiny of His kingdom was not equally clear to all, and in their representations of the same there are evidently degrees of knowledge; but the vision of the certain final fulfilment of God's gracious purposes was not wanting to any. There are, as we have seen in the earlier stage of this discussion, certain ideas given with the Old Testament kingdom and religion, from which prophecy respecting Jehovah's design unfolded itself. Of an essentially similar kind are those predictions found in many of the prophets, of a final struggle of the heathen world against the kingdom of God, which should end in the complete and permanent victory of the latter, and the destruction of the power of the aggressors. We find such announcements in various forms; first in Joel iii. 9-19; then in Mic. iv. 11-13, v. 4, 5; in Zech. xii. 1-13, xiv. 3-5; and last, in Ezek. xxxviii. 39. Apart from their individuality, there are no special historical relations. Their source is purely the idea of the kingdom of God; they are simply representations of the ever-present enmity between the heathen powers and the power of God, coupled with the experience that on account of this antagonistic position, and according to their essential nature, the course of the history of the kingdom of God would be through severe conflict to final victory and peace.

With regard to the other, the concrete historical element, it has justly been observed that "prophecy does not gain its knowledge of the future from the contents of the historical present, but from the counsel

of God, who presides over history, and makes seemingly contrary events contribute to the accomplishment of His purposes" (3). But how do they obtain their knowledge of the future from the counsels of God? Only in that the Spirit of God assures them that, according to the laws of the divine government, future history must and will *originate from the known conditions and relations of the present*. In this way, at all events in its general features, comes to them the knowledge of Jehovah's purpose. Accordingly we continually see how prophecy applies the same principles of God's government of the world and of kingdoms in the light of which its history places the past, to the present and immediate future; how the same prophetico-theocratic doctrine, there, governs the representation of present events, and here, the consideration of approaching occurrences and their resulting train of consequences. The Spirit of God can assure the prophets only of those historical specialities which stand in a somewhat distant connection with the present, but not of those which do not come under this description; because, for the recognition of the latter, there is wanting in their general consciousness those points of connection which make it possible. By this law it is not we who wish to bind divine revelation; for, to avoid the appearance of magic, it has thereby bound itself. In virtue of it, *every prophet has his limits, his historical horizon, circumscribing his vision*. Now it may be narrower, now wider, but *always reaching only so far as the present, considered in the*

*light of the divine counsels, bears in its bosom the events of the future.* Within this historical horizon the divinely wrought convictions of the prophet concerning what is in the counsels of God may attain to clear and decided foreknowledge of particular events, and the prediction is then equally decided and unconditional. So prophesied, for example, Michaiah the son of Imlah, that Ahab and Jehoshaphat would be defeated by the Syrians, and permitted himself to be thrown into prison, with the declaration that he was willing to be regarded as a false prophet if his prediction were not fulfilled (1 Kings xxii. 17-36). In a similar manner Amos predicted the approaching destruction of the Damascene kingdom and the carrying away of the Syrians to Kir (Amos i. 3-5; 2 Kings xvi. 9). Isaiah had the fullest certainty that the kings Rezin and Pekah would not succeed in taking Jerusalem, and that in less than three years their countries would be devastated by the Assyrian armies (Isa. vii. 7, 16, viii. 4), and that the kingdom of Judah would be heavily afflicted by Assyria, from whom it had expected help (Isa. vii. 18-25, viii. 5-7) (4). He also published the deliverance of Jerusalem from the army of Sennacherib, and the destruction of the latter by the direct interposition of Jehovah and the hasty flight of the remnant (Isa. x. 33, 34, xiv. 24-27, xxix. 7, 8, xxx. 27-33, xxxi. 5-9, xxxvii. 33-35) (5). On the other hand, Jeremiah predicted the fixed purpose of God to accomplish the destruction of Jerusalem and the overthrow of the Jewish kingdom by "His servant," Nebuchad-



nezzar; but he also foretold that in seventy years the judgments of God should overtake Babylon, and bring about the deliverance and return of the exiles; and the same prophet predicted the death of the false prophet Hananiah in the course of the year (Jer. xxviii. 16). The fulfilment or non-fulfilment of these definite predictions, whether they were for good or evil, is pointed out as a test of the character of the prophet (Deut. xviii. 22; Jer. xxviii. 8, 9) (6). All the facts contained in these and similar predictions are within the historical horizon of the prophet, and the foreknowledge of the same originated psychologically in accordance with the views expressed on a preceding page. On the other hand, concerning the further course of future history, which, as far as the prophet knew, had no immediate connection with the historical present, he receives no information from God. New developments of the history of his kingdom under wholly different conditions and relations, or occurrences of an entirely peculiar character, remain for him shrouded in the mystery of the divine counsels. It is only the next portion of the path along which God is about to lead His people to another epoch, forming a turning-point in their history, that the enlightened eye of the prophet can see more or less distinctly. But he recognises it as leading to the end which God in His gracious purpose has designed; for the above-mentioned ideal knowledge of the history of the future may be compared in its relation to the concrete historical development of the kingdom of God, so far as the prophet can

survey it from his point of view, to the heavens which limit the spot of earth to be seen from some watch-tower. The latter glory, as observed above, lay before the eyes of every prophet as he gazed into the future ; only the new stages of development in the history of the kingdom which might intervene between him and the fulfilment of his hopes were hidden from him. We have thus pointed out one of the limits of prophetic foresight, and we confidently hope that every one who is accustomed to interpret the prophecies, not according to their real or supposed fulfilment, but according to the sense which the prophets themselves attached to their words, will, from an examination of the predictions admitted to be genuine, obtain the same result. What can be concluded *à priori* proves itself to be in harmony with facts (7).

Respecting the second limit of prophetic foresight we need not say much, as it is generally admitted. It consists in the fact that the *day and the hour* of the accomplishment of the divine purposes were unknown. Neither the apostles nor the Son Himself possessed this knowledge, but only the Father (Matt. xxiv. 36 ; Mark xiii. 32 ; Acts i. 7). Now it is of the nature of all lively hope to regard the blessings hoped for as near as it possibly can ; especially is it so with that hope which springs from faith in the omnipotent God, whose mere word can at once bring to pass the most wonderful events. As, therefore, the apostles expected that Christ would soon come again in His glory, and that they themselves would behold it (1 Cor. xv.

51, 52; 1 Thess. iv. 16–18), so the prophets anticipated the early dawn of Messianic times. The energy of their faith and hope brought the blessing exceedingly near, and it seemed just on the borders of their historical horizon. In this way, and not from the visionary nature of the revelation given to them, it is to be explained that the blessings of the Messianic times are always the cheerful background of the picture in which they portray coming judgments.

It is evident, from the nature of the case, that on account of its faith in the proximity of Messianic blessings, the prophetic consciousness did not distinguish very strictly between what belonged to the approaching history of the kingdom of God and its final completion, but organically connected them with each other, and conceived of them as indivisible. If the prophet was conscious that he could not accurately fix the coming of Messianic times,—for if we except the book of Daniel we nowhere find very accurate data (8),—he still places the events of the present, and the consequent occurrences of the immediate future, in close relation with the ultimate destiny. He knew, therefore, that the road along which God was conducting His people was leading them to that end. How should he not, if his hopes brought Messianic blessings near to him, so depict them in his representations? Certainly he must consider the present and the near future in the light reflected upon them by the ultimate design of Jehovah, and in that light alone could he solve the enigma presented by the history of his times. He

knows the hindrances which the present places in the way of the realization of his hopes, and the difference between the actual condition of the people of God suffering from present or approaching judgments, and that to which they are destined in the divine counsels, and he may surely rejoice as he sees its approach. The clearing away of those hindrances, and the removal of this difference, must therefore be an element in his Messianic predictions, if they come to him from the Spirit of God simply through a psychological medium, as representations and conceptions standing in genetic connection with his already existing knowledge. Without conscious design, following purely an inner necessity, the prophet gave to his pictures of the Messianic age, and to the events leading to it, more or less the historical colouring of his times. As he himself saw the present in the light of the Messiah's age, so he reflected the glory of the latter only in those broken rays and colours in which the atmosphere, by which he was surrounded, permitted it to appear. Hence we read in Messianic predictions of the reunion of the ten tribes with the kingdom of Judah, of the restoration of the early power of the house of David, of the subjection of the Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites, and Philistines, and of the breaking of the oppressive yoke of Assyria. It is evident that in these concrete historical features we cannot, like Hengstenberg, recognise merely images taken from the events among which the prophet lived, in order to set forth the character of Christ's kingdom (9). At least, in the opinion of

the prophets themselves, it is not to be placed to the account of pictorial representation, when they speak of the Messiah as a king dwelling on Mount Sion. If they say that in the future times Israel shall no more look for help from Assyria or Egypt, they do not thereby intend merely to give a figurative representation of Israel's faithfulness to God. The healing of the breach between the kingdom of Judah and the ten tribes is to them not *merely* a symbolic expression of the idea that peace and love shall reign among His people. And when in their Messianic prospects the discourse is of the overthrow of the Edomites, Moabites, and others, or of judgments upon Assyria or Babylon, the overthrow is not to be interpreted spiritually; nor are these nations merely typical of the world's power in opposition to the kingdom of God. To the prophets themselves, and to those to whom their predictions were first uttered, all such historical statements have a much more essential and immediately practical importance; not what they figuratively represent, but the things themselves, according to the simple sense of the words, were necessary, in the eyes of the prophets and their contemporaries, that Israel might become possessed of the happiness and the glory which had been promised, and indeed these historical features contributed very much to their efficiency in answering their immediate end. This spiritualizing evaporation of the concrete contents of Messianic prophecy is the result of Hengstenberg's neglect of the first duty of an expositor, namely, to place himself in the standpoint of the Old

Testament, and especially of the individual prophets, and there to discover the sense which he attached to his words (10).

The expectation that "the end of the days" was near, occasioned not only the admission of the historical features of the age into the picture of Messianic times; it had also the effect of sublimating and exalting many approaching events. Coming judgments were not seldom so depicted, as if in them the last assize, the judgment of the world, was accomplished. Especially was this the case when the prophecy was indefinite; but when the prophet was more decided as to the kind of visitation, the ideal, the picture of the last great catastrophe, receded. An instructive proof occurs in Isa. ii., in the forcible picture of the day of visitation there given, when all lofty things are to be brought low, Jehovah alone exalted, and the idols utterly abolished. When compared with the more definite announcement in Isa. v. 25-30, we find that the approaching judgment is to be completed in two acts, and that the second chastening dispensation is to be inflicted through the instrumentality of the Assyrian arms. In like manner, times of grace and blessing, which are near at hand, are frequently so depicted that their coming appears like that of the Messianic age.

We cannot here consider in detail how the contents of Messianic prophecy, uttered during the lapse of centuries, bear witness to our exposition. While referring in this connection to the frequently mentioned treatise by Bertheau, we shall satisfy ourselves, more for the

illustration of the subject than for its complete establishment, with placing before the reader a few proofs of the validity of our position.

*(c) Illustrative Proofs.*

We find that with the oldest prophets, Joel, Amos, and Hosea, whose predictions have come down to us, the historical horizon of their foresight extends only to the turning-point of the history of the divine kingdom, which dates from the encroachments of Assyrian power, and immediately behind are the Messianic times. Although these prophets clearly perceived how great must be the change among the people before their hopes could be realized, still, according to their predictions, the kingdom of God was rapidly to reach its destined perfection, and the process was very simple. According to Joel, B.C. 870–850, it was most direct. In the terrible plague of locusts, and the long drought which devastated the land and brought hunger and famine, he saw a sign of approaching judgment, and indeed the beginning of the last catastrophe (i. 15, ii. 1, 11); but after the people had shown themselves willing to listen to his call to repentance, he has no further visions of coming wrath; but without further calamities (11), deliverance is succeeded by divine interpositions, through which God's gracious purposes are fully accomplished. There is the reunion of the captive children of Judah and Jerusalem with the people of God, the general outpouring of the Spirit, the destroy-

ing judgments of the Most High upon the heathen assembled for their last struggle against the kingdom of God, by which Israel is to be for ever secured against their attacks. Had Joel not left out of consideration the kingdom of the ten tribes, he would certainly not have been able to give so facile a representation of the perfect times. Amos (B.C. 790), and his later contemporary Hosea, whose special mission was to the ten tribes, had a clearer vision of what the near future had in its bosom for Israel. It was not upon the heathen merely that heavy maledictions were to fall, but also upon the people of God themselves, and mainly upon the kingdom of the ten tribes, which was to be destroyed from the earth (Amos ix. 8); and its inhabitants, as many of them as had not been put to death, were to be scattered among the nations. Thus, by the judgments of God, the evil of division was to be removed, and the less guilty kingdom received the promise that the house of David should remain. Still Judah was not to escape terrible visitations (Amos ii. 5, vi. 1; Hos. v. 10, 12-14, vi. 4, viii. 14, x. 11, xii. 2), which should exterminate the wicked from amongst the people of God (Amos ix. 10). The prophets also foresaw that a nation, which had only recently appeared on the stage of history, and coming from the distant north, would be the instrument of this infliction; but this was the limit of their knowledge. Even the nation itself, then, for the first time, came within the circle of their vision, and was still to some extent in the shade. To Amos, and in the older prophecies of Hosea, its



name was unknown (chap. i.—iii.), and only in his later predictions Hosea points to Asshur as the chief instrument of punishment, and to Assyria as the land of exile. Still it remains undiscovered in what way God will deliver His people from the power of their mighty foe. Neither Amos nor Hosea speaks of coming judgment upon Asshur, and neither of them knows anything of an approaching overthrow of the kingdom of Judah. Deeply as it is humbled, unlike the kingdom of Israel, it does not sink under its burdens (12); but as soon as the double purpose of the inflictions is answered,—the restoration of union by the destruction of the more guilty kingdom, and the extermination of the wicked from the community, and the consequent reformation of the remnant of the people,—there comes the dawn of Messianic times, in which Jehovah restores the fallen kingdom of David to its ancient power and glory, and that, too, in its original unity,—a state of things in which the people of God will enjoy all those temporal and spiritual blessings which the full realization of the covenant brings with it.

The immediate relation in which the contents of the Messianic predictions of these elder prophets stand to the history of their times must strike every one. Joel begins with the comforting assurance that Jehovah will deliver His returning people from their present troubles; He will destroy the army of locusts, He will send fertilizing and seasonable rain, and bless the land with wonderful fruitfulness (Joel ii. 18–27). Towards the end he returns to what at that time was a specially

suitable and gratifying prediction (iii. 18). The kingdom of Judah, after Rehoboam's time, had suffered much from neighbouring enemies, first from the Egyptians (1 Kings xiv. 25, 26); then from the Edomites, who, entering the country, slaughtered the defenceless inhabitants (Joel iii. 19) (13); and yet more recently from the Philistines, who, uniting with the Arabian tribes, penetrated to the principal city, put to death the greater part of the royal family, plundered the palace and the temple, and through the medium of the Phœnicians, who followed the army as slave merchants, sold their captives to the Edomites and the distant Javanites (Ezek. xxvii. 19; Joel iii. 1-8; 2 Chron. xxi. 16, 17, xxii. 1; Amos i. 6-9). Joel's threatenings are therefore specially directed towards these nations, and his predictions assure deliverance and return to the captives, and future safety to the kingdom and its capital (iii. 1-7). And then we find that all his predictions concerning the direct progress of the history of the divine kingdom to its destined glory proceed on the assumption that he has not to reproach the kingdom of Judah for apostasy from God, and that the people were ready to listen to his call to repentance. Amos was acquainted with Joel's prophecies, but only retains one, the remarkable fruitfulness of the Holy Land, essentially unchanged (Amos ix. 13; Joel iii. 18). Certainly he speaks of the return of the captives, as Hosea does also; but neither of them has in mind those Jews sold to the Javanites, but, in harmony with the judgments they had pro-

claimed, those who had been carried into exile from the kingdom of the ten tribes. With regard to the remainder, we find in their Messianic prophecies the historical colouring, particularly in the prediction of the reunion of the whole kingdom of God under the royal house of David, the re-subjection of the neighbouring nations, including especially the remnant of the Edomites (Amos ix. 12), and in the announcement that in the perfect times Israel will not seek help, as now, either from Asshur or Egypt (Hos. xiv. 3); that in connection with these historic allusions the predictions of the elder prophets really place before us the completion of the divine purposes, is evident when we think of Joel's prophecy of the general outpouring of the Spirit, or of Hosea's beautiful picture of the inward and everlasting covenant which Jehovah will make with His people (ii. 19-22, xiv. 5-7).

With the prophets of the Assyrian period—Isaiah and Micah—the proclamations of punishment to be inflicted by Assyria upon Judah on account of its idolatries sound as ominously as with their predecessors. Both prophets declare repeatedly that only a small remnant would reform and escape destruction, and, as the true Israel from which the people of God were to be renewed, would be partakers of His salvation (Isa. vi. 13, vii. 22, x. 20-23; Mic. ii. 12, iv. 7, v. 2, vii. 18). According to Micah, the approaching judgments are to end in the overthrow of the existing kingdom, the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, and the deportation of the people to Babylon

(i. 16, iii. 12, iv. 9, 10, vii. 13). And not only has Isaiah terrible threatenings for the times of Ahaz (vii. 17-20); but when King Hezekiah, by the advice of his nobles, was disposed to seek help in alliance with Egypt, notwithstanding the warning of the prophet, he pronounces the heaviest judgments (Isa. xxxii. 9-14, xxii. 1-14, xxviii. 17-22, xxx. 12-17). But when Hezekiah turned with his whole heart unto God, He repented of the evil which, according to Jer. xxvi. 18, 19, He had threatened through Micah; and Isaiah could announce, with a divinely inwrought certainty, that the haughty Assyrian would not be permitted to conquer the city, and that the predicted overthrow of the kingdom would not come (xxxiii., xxxvii. 22-35, x. 32-34, xiv. 24-27, xvii. 12-14, xviii. 4-6, xxix. 5-8, xxx. 27-33, xxxi. 5-9). The predictions of Isaiah and Micah in this connection are only the corresponding steps to the progress of historic development, and to the now more decided character of religious conditions; and their vision penetrated further into the future than that of their predecessors, and they saw clearly and distinctly behind Jehovah's chastisement of the kingdom of Judah the judgment by which the pride of the Assyrian was to be punished, his power broken, and the people of God delivered. In the meantime, it had been fully recognised that the Assyrian power, with its high-flying plans of conquest and its openly-declared intention to put an end to the independent existence of the kingdom of Judah, stood in the way of the accomplishment of

the purpose of God concerning His people. Only when Asshur's power was destroyed was there opportunity for the setting up of the kingdom of God in its perfection and glory. But this Isaiah also brings everywhere into the closest connection with the approaching deliverance of the people from the power of Assyria. All the purposes of divine chastisement will be realized in the immediately approaching times of judgment (Isa. x. 12). The deliverance of Israel from the yoke of Assyria is therefore the beginning of a series of gracious manifestations, by which the nation will be prepared, internally and externally, for the promised blessing (Isa. ix. 1-7, xi. 11-16, xxx. 19-26, xxxi. 7-9, xxxiii. 17-24). Nothing is said of any new intervening catastrophe. The triumph of the kingdom of God over the Assyrian power lies on the borders of Isaiah's historical horizon, and he sees it in the glory shed upon it by the breaking dawn of Messianic times. And though he, as in the first half of the eleventh chapter, draws an ideal picture of the future kingdom of God, he does not omit in his further exposition to present prominently the great deliverance occurring within his historical horizon as the substantial commencement of God's last great deed of mercy; for the second half of the chapter, in remarkable contrast with the first, contains those striking features of contemporary history, and those strongly marked references to national politics which so often come to the front in Isaiah's Messianic predictions. How intensely the hopes of the prophet were fixed

upon the Messianic blessings *as about to be realized*, he expressly tells us (Isa. xxix. 17); and it is clear that since Sennacherib's army had hurled itself against the kingdom of God and its capital city, from the nature of the case he expected the culminating act of divine wrath upon that power, and it is only when he has occasion to represent the divine displeasure as ending in the overthrow and devastation of Jerusalem that the prospect of Messianic times recedes to a greater distance (xxxii. 14). This occasion occurs after the kingdom had been delivered from the Assyrian power; when Hezekiah, proud of his treasures and munitions of war, and filled with vanity at the honour shown him by the Babylonian king, contracted fresh guilt. There thus opened to the prophet toward the close of his life the sad prospect of fresh chastisements, involving the carrying away of the royal family to Babylon (Isa. xxxix. 5-7).

With Micah, as with Isaiah in his thirty-second chapter, the dawn of Messianic times is at a greater distance, since he has in prospect the overthrow of the existing kingdom and the destruction of Jerusalem; hence comes the rebuilding of the city and the re-establishment of the kingdom of David as an essential part of his Messianic predictions. With him also the perspective of future history widens and takes in the last attack of the united heathen nations which is to follow the enthronement of the Messianic king (Mic. iv. 11-13, v. 4-7). Yet his historical horizon reaches no further than that of his greater contemporaries.

The destruction of the Assyrian empire is also with him the beginning of the restoration and completion of the kingdom of God (vii. 8–20), for Asshur is still at the head of the conspiracy of the united nations against the holy city, and therefore his country will be devastated by the victorious generals of the Messianic king (v. 4–6).

A new turning-point in the history of the kingdom of God we find in the succession to the throne of the idolatrous Manasseh. His zeal for idols, his introduction of idol-worship into the temple at Jerusalem, the bloody persecution of the worshippers of Jehovah, and especially of the prophets, the faithlessness of the priests, the increasing multitude of false prophets, the general apostasy of the people, show how the state of affairs in the kingdom, which under Hezekiah had been so full of hope, had in a short time become worse than ever. The measure of guilt was soon filled. The prophets had therefore a new and heavy chastisement to announce, bringing ruin to the kingdom and capital, and exile and death to the people (2 Kings xxi. 11–16). And this terrible threatening was maintained even when Josiah, a more devout king, ascended the throne, the execution being only postponed until after his death (2 Kings xxii. 15–20, xxiii. 26, 27; Jer. xv. 1–4). Zephaniah speaks of the coming of this great calamity, and Jeremiah refers to it in his earlier predictions, but, like Amos and Hosea, in an indefinite manner; there is to come from the distant north (14) a people speaking a strange language, and

it is not until after the Chaldeans, at the commencement of the reign of Jehoiachin, had begun to play the part in Western Asia which Assyria had done, that they are distinctly pointed out as the instrument to be used by Jehovah for the execution of His judgments upon Israel and the surrounding nations.

The astonishing contrast between the actual condition into which Israel had been brought by its sins, and the great destiny to which God had appointed it, lay clearly before the enlightened eye of the prophets. They saw the time fast approaching when, according to all human appearances, the kingdom of God would be destroyed, and when Israel in exile from the Holy Land, as once in Egypt, must bear the yoke of servitude. Before their eyes was the powerful Babylon fully prepared to defend the pre-eminence it had so suddenly acquired; but certain as it was that this colossus must be overthrown before the kingdom of God could rise from its ruin, the chief hindrance to the carrying out of the purposes of God's grace was not in it, but in the guilt and obduracy of Israel. The Messianic times now, therefore, appeared to be at a greater distance; but the certainty that the people of God would yet rejoice in the magnificent realization of His restored kingdom, is not only tenaciously adhered to, but the restoration of Jerusalem is expressly and minutely proclaimed (Jer. xxx.—xxxiii.). In the time of their calamity, the continuance of which, according to Jeremiah, was to be about seventy years (xxv. 11, 12, xxix. 10), Jehovah will carry out His purpose of purifying His people and



leading them to thorough conversion, and He will then restore to them the fulness of His grace and truth. Babylon, which has executed His judgments on other nations, must at last drink the cup of His indignation to its dregs. With a single blow He will plunge into ruin the proud structure of worldly power, and its destruction will be the signal for the deliverance of His people from their captivity. The forgiveness of their sins, and their moral and religious renovation, wrought by Jehovah Himself, will remove all personal difficulties in the way of the full accomplishment of His gracious purposes (Jer. xxiv. 7, xxix. 12, 13, xxxi. 33, xxxii. 39, 40). They are to return to their country, rebuild the ruins of Jerusalem and other desolated cities, and once more rejoice in the gracious presence and government of Jehovah. The divine kingdom is to be re-established, and this kingdom is the final dispensation. Everywhere Jeremiah brings the commencement of Messianic times into immediate connection with the deliverance of Israel from the power of the Chaldeans; everywhere he speaks of the returning exiles as the people with whom Jehovah will conclude a new covenant, in whose hearts He will write His law, and who, both great and small, will be near to Him and conversant with Him. Of new calamities threatening the kingdom of God after its deliverance from the Babylonian exile, and before its full development, he knows nothing. From that deliverance onward the people of God will proceed in a straight course, and in a short time reach their magnificent destiny. In the

prophecies of Ezekiel, who was a contemporary of Jeremiah, and who himself lived and laboured in exile, we certainly read of imminent danger to the kingdom of God "in the end of the days" after its restoration. For him, the victory of Jehovah and of His kingdom divides itself into two acts, rather widely separated from each other. The judgments which bring deliverance to Israel fall, first of all, upon the neighbouring nations which have already been brought into conflict with the people of God. After Jehovah has manifested Himself to be the Holy One in the signal deliverance of His people, His kingdom is established, and there is a time of security and peace (Ezek. xxxviii. 8, 11, 12); but the nations of the distant north and south and south-west have not learned to know Jehovah's power, and at "the end of the days" they assemble under Gog to fight against Israel; but the Lord destroys their numberless hosts, and consumes their country with fire (Ezek. xxxix. 6). Only when the most distant nations have learned the power of the living God, and the sanctity of His kingdom, is the latter assured against further attack (Ezek. xxxviii. 29). But though "the end of the days" is thus postponed, we still find that, according to Ezekiel, the return of the exiles to the Holy Land distinguishes the commencement of that dispensation. This great act of mercy which God performs for His name's sake, accomplishes in this stiff-necked people what judgments had failed to do, and produces in them a penitent recognition of their unfaithfulness, and a sincere return to the Lord (Ezek.

xi. 19, 20, xvi. 63, xxxvi. 25–27, xxxvii. 23, xxxix. 29); and when, in addition to this, the neighbouring nations have learned to fear His power and majesty, nothing more stands in the way of the restoration of the kingdom in all the glory of the latter days.

With Micah, the Messianic King has ascended the throne before the decisive struggle takes place between the kingdom of God and the heathen nations; and as, in the Revelation of John, the kingdom of Christ has stood a thousand years before Satan is let loose to lead the hosts of Gog and Magog against it (Rev. xx.), so also with Ezekiel, the people of God rejoice for some time in the blessing of complete communion with Him before, through His judgments on the hosts of Gog, they are assured of their safe possession of the blessing. To him also the deliverance from captivity and the return from exile appear in the glory which the dawn of Messianic times pours upon them. Much more so is this the case with the great prophet who lived towards the close of the exile, and whose predictions are preserved to us in Isa. xl.–lxvi. He distinctly saw that Israel needed much renewing and sifting before it could fulfil its great mission to humanity, and that, as the servant of Jehovah, the nation must deliver its testimony in the midst of patient suffering, even unto death, before it could attain to that glory to which it was destined. His predictions contain a rich historical picture of the future, representing many acts of mercy and judgment on the part of Jehovah, and much labour and suffering on the part of His servant, as intervening

between the time then present and that when Israel should stand as a royal priesthood between God and mankind (Isa. lxi. 6, lxvi. 21), and when the purpose of Jehovah, that every knee should bow to Him (xlv. 22), and heaven and earth should be renewed and glorified, should be accomplished (lxv. 17, lxvi. 22). Still he recognises in the changes introduced by Cyrus, the man chosen of Jehovah for the carrying out of His will, those birth-throes which herald the approach of deliverance and the coming of the kingdom of God. Everywhere the salvation of the people from the power of Babylon, now so near, is for him the starting-point from which the fulfilment of the divine counsels will without delay hasten onward. The nation which Jehovah in person will lead up through the desert to Canaan, repeating the wonders of Mosaic times, will be fitted for its grand destiny by the Spirit of God (Isa. xlii. 1, xlv. 3); it will be a congregation of holy and righteous persons, for nothing unclean shall return to the holy city (Isa. lx. 21); all the inhabitants of the restored kingdom shall be taught of God, as they had formerly been by the prophets (Isa. liv. 13). Through the divine judgments upon the Chaldean empire, and the glorious manifestations of Jehovah for the deliverance of His people, a way is prepared for the servant of God to exercise his vocation in the heathen world, and the vanity of idols and the sole divinity of Jehovah are to be manifest to all flesh (Isa. xl. 5, xlv. 6, xlix. 26, lii. 10, lix. 19, lxvi. 18). Even Cyrus, from his wonderful career divinely predicted, must come to the

knowledge of the true God (Isa. xlv. 3). In a word, Jehovah will no more be angry with His people (liv. 9), but will glorify Himself by His unchanging mercy toward them, until at length they shall enjoy in full measure their predestined greatness, and all nations shall be brought into the kingdom.

We might point out how, after the exile, when the predictions of deliverance to Israel and the re-establishment of the kingdom had been fulfilled, but with little of the expected prosperity and power, Messianic prophecy publishes anew the shortly approaching completion of the kingdom so feebly restored, and to this end clothes itself once more in the garments of contemporary history. We might show how Haggai unfolds the prospect of a speedy divine interposition (ii. 6, 21, 22), which would shake heaven and earth, and land and sea, which would destroy all the powers of the world, and lead all nations to bring as tribute their gold and silver to adorn the temple of Jehovah, so that its magnificence would be greater than it had ever been before; how Zechariah represents as most important the activity of the Messiah in making the temple a fit habitation for Jehovah (vi. 13); how Malachi expects His early and sudden appearance (iii. 1, 5); and how, further, when under the tyrant Antiochus Epiphanes Israel had to struggle for the maintenance of its ancient faith and worship, the prophets, looking into the future, saw the approaching triumph of the nation, the resurrection of departed Israelites, the judgment of the world, and the establishment of the heavenly kingdom

upon the ruins of all earthly dominions (Dan. ii. 44, vii. 8, 9, 21, 22, 25-27, viii. 17, xi. 35, 45, xii. 1-3, 7, 11, 12);—but we refrain; for our desire to show by examples how the prophets, in the conviction that the Messianic salvation was near, brought it into the closest and most immediate relation to the historical events of their times, has been sufficiently accomplished.

“ We have found unquestionably that there was a limit to those views given to the prophets by the Spirit of God, and that they believed the day of the Lord and the blessings of the last times to be much nearer than they really were, and that God’s gracious purposes, which at some future time were to be fulfilled, always came within their consciousness clad in the veil of contemporaneous history. It can hardly be disputed that God might have completed His kingdom at the time and in the manner predicted, if Israel had discharged the obligations upon which such completion was dependent. In the counsels of the eternal and allwise God, to whom Israel’s future course was fully known, the time and the hour for the accomplishment of His purposes were fixed before the foundation of the world, and only in “the fulness of the time” could the Saviour appear; for the light which He was to give to the world was, according to the eternal purpose of God, of a much higher character than the atmosphere of their times permitted the prophets to see. This limitation of the prophetic foresight was no defect of the divine communication, nor was it an imperfection clinging to and disfiguring Messianic prophecy; it was rather the result of *the same divine wisdom* which hid

from the apostles, and which hides from us, the day and the hour when the Son of man will come; but which at the same time exhorts us to observe the signs of the times, and with constant watchfulness and readiness, with firm faith and enduring hope, to fix our gaze upon the end of the way of God. If Messianic prophecy had pointed to the climax of the history of His kingdom as far away in the cloudy distance, unconnected with the events and occurrences then happening, it could hardly have exercised any influence upon those to whom it was immediately given. Only in virtue of its historical character, as explained above, could it accomplish its immediate design, namely, to guide the contemporaries of the prophets in their present difficulties; to be a light to them in the way along which God was leading them, enabling them to recognise it *as the path to a higher state*, and turning their thoughts and conduct towards it. Further discoveries of the future were not necessary. The light of divine wisdom illuminated only the next portion of the way, and reached to the first turning-point in the history of the kingdom of God. In approaching trials there was continually seen the last judgment, and in the dawn of seasons of grace and prosperity the coming of the great Deliverer (15). In this way, those who first received Messianic predictions were enabled to spend their lives in patience and hope, and to labour for the coming of the kingdom of God, without being too much discouraged by the reign of unrighteousness within, or the triumphs of the heathen without.

The faith of really pious Israelites in Messianic prophecy could hardly be shaken by the fact that Messianic times were more distant than they had been led to expect, and that in consequence of entirely altered circumstances every individual particular could not be realized. There are two reasons for the steadfastness of their faith. One is, that the predictions did not remain wholly unfulfilled in the times immediately following their utterance, as for instance the announcement of judgments to be executed upon Israel, first by the allied Syrians and Ephraimites, and then by Assyria; and as by the deliverance of the people of God from the Assyrians the Messianic predictions of Isaiah were at least relatively fulfilled, so also were those of Jeremiah and Ezekiel and “the great unknown” in the deliverance and return of the exiles, and the re-establishment of the kingdom. And though this contemporaneous accomplishment of prophecy appeared to be only a feeble commencement of those great things which had been foretold, still they must have been regarded as a pledge that God would surely carry out His purposes as revealed through the prophets, though He reserved to Himself the hour of their accomplishment. The other ground of confidence we find in the consideration that pious Israelites would always recognise in their own sins and the national unfaithfulness a hindrance, on account of which the holy and righteous God kept back from them the fulness of the promised blessing; indeed, the prophets themselves, when the prosperity predicted by their



predecessors had really commenced, unfolded new prospects and prophesied heavier punishments, interrupting and postponing Messianic blessings when the people, by fresh apostasies, had contracted additional guilt. We find also that the later prophets recognised the predictions of those who preceded them as divine, and succeeding generations of the people accepted as the word of God the prophetic writings of the Old Testament canon, though they must have known that the Messianic salvation appeared neither at the time nor in the manner which the course of prophecy had led them to expect (16).

2. *The powerful Influence of Historical Relations upon the Contents of Messianic Prophecy.*

The connection between history and Messianic prophecy has hitherto been but imperfectly pointed out. The historical relations of the time then present exercised a yet more powerful limiting and deciding influence on the contents of prophecy ; an influence which extends to its inmost nature, even to the eternal, ideal contents of the historical form. To two particulars we have now to direct special attention.

(a) *Their Influence upon the Development of various germs of Messianic Knowledge.*

In the organism of the Old Testament theocracy there existed various factors which exercised a deter-

mining influence upon the form of events and relations corresponding with or opposing the will of God, and upon the course of their historical development,—the congregation, the priesthood, and the prophetic office,—the people, the princes, the judges ; and above all, the nobility and royalty. The influence of the various offices and ranks upon the national life during the course of centuries was by no means always alike. At different times this influence was exercised by the various factors in different degrees. Hope rested now upon the one and now upon the other for the preservation and good government of the kingdom of God ; and it could hardly be otherwise than that in the consciousness of the prophets those factors which exercised only a limited influence upon the course of events should fall into the background, and that, on the other hand, the power which moulded the life of the nation and the affairs of the kingdom, both for the present and the near future, should come prominently into view and chiefly occupy their thoughts.

We find also that the variety of circumstances in which Israel was found at different stages of its history so operated that the special attention of both people and leaders, as well as that of the prophets, was directed sometimes to the relation of the kingdom of Judah to the heathen nations, at others to its position with regard to the ten tribes ; now exclusively to the internal affairs of the country, or to the condition of public worship, or matters connected with the law, or some other national or theocratic question. The centre

around which genuine national and theocratic interests revolved was naturally that upon which the attention of the prophets was fixed, and neither could be without powerful influence upon the contents of Messianic prophecy. Accordingly there entered into the contents of the prophetic consciousness now this and now that idea, each containing germs of Messianic knowledge. There was the idea of the congregation of Jehovah, of the kingdom of God, of the theocratic reign, of the priesthood, and of the constant presence of Jehovah in the temple ; and in virtue of the organic, that is, the psychological origination of Messianic prophecy, these ideas must have come into prominence before others. We see, therefore, that in the course of its development from these various ideas, Messianic prophecy, in consequence of its connection with contemporary history, derived its chief contents from the rich fountain of Old Testament revelation, and sometimes from one and sometimes from another chief starting-point, unveiled the blessings of the last times. There, a fruitful germ of Messianic knowledge lay like a seed-corn long buried in the earth, until at length the historical situation occurred which enabled it to spring to the light of day and display its vital power ; yonder, under more favourable relations, another realizes a more rapid development, and in a short time unfolds the richest bloom ; then comes a season of rest, its power of growth slackens and dies, until at length, when the historical conditions become more favourable for its development, a fresh growth shows that it was not

exhausted. The law which governs the development of Messianic prophecy may be formulated thus: *The prophets make the individual factors in the constitution of the kingdom the subject of Messianic prophecy, in proportion as the same exercise at the time a deciding influence upon the realization of the idea of the kingdom of God; and in like manner they regard the various national and theocratic interests according to the measure of their importance to that kingdom amongst existing relations. In consequence of this, sometimes one and sometimes another of the ideas contained in the Old Testament religion and government constitutes, during the various periods of the history of the old covenant, the principal starting-point of Messianic predictions, and the chief source of their peculiar contents.*

*Reflections on Predictions concerning the Messiah.*

Let us endeavour more in detail to illustrate and prove this position; and first of all we may glance at the history of the development of *Messianic prophecy* in the narrower sense from the idea of the *theocratic kingdom*. In the representations given by Joel of the kingdom of God in the last times, the Messianic King has no place. His predictions spring from the common ground of the ideas of the nation and the kingdom of God; and the end to which the people should attain through the perfection of their communion with Jehovah is ever before his eyes. When the gift of prophecy has become the common possession of all, that end is

reached (Joel ii. 28-32). With the prophets who came after him, predictions concerning the coming of the Messianic King begin to appear. Amos associates the dawn of the last times with the re-establishment of the kingdom of David in its primitive power and grandeur, but still he does not speak of the person of the Messiah; and his predictions generally are imperfectly developed, for according to him the perfection of the kingdom of God consists in the perpetuation of the existing condition. His ideal of the future was all but realized in the prosperous times of David and Solomon (Amos ix. 11-15). The kingdom of David takes a similar position in the prophecies of Hosea, and without it he does not seem to be able to comprehend the completion of the kingdom of God. The return of the Ephraimites to Jehovah is their return to the authority of the Davidic king; but still the latter is not characterized as the Messiah (Hos. i. 11, iii. 5 (17)). We shall grievously err, however, if we bring this advent of the Davidic king within the circle of the prophetic vision, into fundamental connection with the promising flight which it took after the accession of Uzziah, who, in addition to piety and energy, was adorned with every kingly virtue (18). Amos and Hosea distinctly saw that the kingdom of the ten tribes, notwithstanding its prosperity under Jeroboam II., was destined to destruction. But for the evil which was to lead to that result royalty was in the main responsible, continuing as it did through every change of the reigning family, even in better times, in the way

of Jeroboam I., “who made Israel to sin” (2 Kings xiv. 24, xv. 9). The kingdom of Judah, on the other hand, not only rose again to a measure of importance and power in relation to its neighbour which it had not possessed since the division, but its internal condition became much improved; and although the prophets had still enough to rebuke and condemn, yet, so far as the influence and vigorous government of the pious kings went, it was full of hope. Once more they experienced the happiness of the firmly established authority of the divinely chosen house of David; at least in a great measure Judah had it to thank for the blessings enjoyed before the disruption of the kingdom. The prophets therefore saw in its full restoration one of the essential conditions of the perfection of the kingdom of God. Thus, therefore, they could in general all the more easily support the kingdom of David—although both Amos and Hosea have chiefly in view the kingdom of the ten tribes—when a Davidic king of the kind that then adorned the throne seemed sufficient to set aside the idolatry of Ephraim and restore the unity and greatness of the kingdom.

We meet with the *Messianic King* for the first time in a later contemporary of Hosea, the author of Zech. ix. 11. He tells us how He enters Jerusalem amidst the exultation of the people, and describes His person and government (Zech. ix. 9, 10). As God Himself is called *צִדִּיק וְנוֹשִׁיעַ* (Isa. xlv. 21), so this King, as His true representative on the earth, is *צִדִּיק וְנוֹשִׁיעַ*. His actions correspond with the divine will, and therefore

Jehovah at all times bestows upon Him salvation, and *upon the people through Him* (Jer. xxiii. 61 ; Deut. xxxiii. 29). He is meek and lowly, far from all self-seeking or violent conduct against others. Dignity and meekness, fulness of divinely bestowed power, and the most gentle and peaceful disposition, are combined in Him. By His mere word, and without any of the instrumentalities of war customary in the world, but which, by the will of God, are banished from His kingdom, He will establish peace among the nations, and the blessed government of this revered and powerful Prince of peace will reach from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. Not long after this picture was drawn (19), we see the predictions concerning the Messianic King in their principal features *reach the highest point of development in the writings of Isaiah and his contemporary Micah*. Both prophets associate with His appearing the beginning of prosperous times, and point to Him as the Man in whom the kingdom of God is to find its accomplishment. They speak of Him as a human king, wonderful in person, who by virtue of His special relation to God stands far above all other men, as the instrument through whom God will carry out His purposes, as the Mediator of the Messianic salvation of the people of God and mankind in general. In the time of Ahaz, Isaiah represents Him as a King who, in an extraordinary measure excelling human judgment, always followed the wisest counsels (ix. 5, 6). There is something divinely wonderful in His judicious activity ;

—פֶּלֶא יִעֲזֵר, compare Isa. xxviii. 29, where הַפֶּלִיא עֲזָה is said of God. While, further, God makes Him, like the angel of Jehovah, the medium of revelation, and through Him performs His mighty acts, He is also in Him and through Him present with His people; and as Jehovah Himself is called the “Mighty God,” so the same title is given to Him (Isa. x. 21; Deut. x. 17; Jer. xxxii. 18). We must think of the severity with which the Old Testament faith maintained the unapproachable elevation of the holy God above all creatures, in order to appreciate the peculiar and intimate relation with Him of the Messianic King expressed by this appropriation of a divine name. He is further represented as exercising fatherly care over the people of God (Isa. xxii. 21), and is therefore characterized as the Prince of peace (Zech. ix. 8–10). But His Messianic work consists in the deliverance of the people of God from the yoke of Assyria, and in the destruction of all implements of war, in the restoration of lasting peace, in the consolidation and extension of the authority of the house of David, and in the full establishment of righteousness in the kingdom of God (20). In a still more interesting manner does Isaiah speak of the person and work of the Messiah in one of his predictions belonging to the time of Hezekiah (xi. 1–9). Upon Him rests, as upon no one else, the Spirit of the Lord, and He is thus endowed with those gifts and graces which fit Him to be the instrument through whom Jehovah carries on the government of His kingdom. His great concern is that the people



should live in the fear of God, in which He Himself finds His happiness. His magisterial decisions are delivered, not according to outward appearances and human testimony, but from an unfailing perception of the truth and a knowledge of the heart. His administration of justice is therefore not human and imperfect; the Spirit of God speaks through Him, and in such a way that in His judgments He decides according to the mind of God. Especially is He godlike in His dealings with the poor and the oppressed; His mere word suffices to strike down the oppressor and to destroy the wicked. As a King, He rules as one whose greatest glory is righteousness and truth in relation both to God and men. By His government of the divine kingdom it will become what it should be, a kingdom in which evil no longer exists, in which no one injures another, which is filled with the knowledge of the Lord, and therefore of righteousness and peace. Through Him also the kingdom of God is to realize its destined extent. His residence becomes the metropolis of all nations; they pay homage to Him, and refer their differences to Him for decision. He is also the medium of the Messianic saving operations of Jehovah, described in Isa. ii. 1-3, by which the people learn to know the law of God, and the whole earth becomes a kingdom of peace. An entirely similar picture of the Messianic King and His government is drawn by Micah, v. 1-7. After the judgments of God have swept over Jerusalem and the house of David, the latter will be raised from the deepest humiliation and

obscurity to the highest power and glory. Like David, the Messianic branch will spring from the ancient stem (21) in the insignificant Bethlehem. As in the restoration of the people through their deliverance from captivity, so in the re-establishment of the kingdom of David, the history of the past repeats itself. This Messianic King will then, as the agent and representative of Jehovah, the Shepherd of Israel, clothed with His omnipotent power, exercise the pastoral office over the people of God in such a way that through His government, in God's great name, it shall be manifest what God is to His people. We pass by what Micah further says of Him, to ask how it comes to pass that these prophets have almost as completely unfolded the knowledge of God's purposes of mercy and plan of government contained in the idea of the theocratic kingdom, as anywhere else we find it? We might reply, that when once this idea had entered the circle of Messianic expectations, the disparity between it and the historic kingdom must have been manifest to them, and thus the more general predictions of the Davidic kingdom of the future would all the more decidedly gather around the Messianic David. But the reply is not altogether satisfactory. If this were the reason of the development of Messianic prophecy in its narrower sense, why did it not come distinctly into the foreground when the disparity was greatest? Why not in the time of Ahaz rather than in the time of Hezekiah? (22). And why did the representations of the Messianic King grow dim—as we shall see—under the last kings of Judah?

We can find the ground of this rich and rapid development of prophecy concerning the Messianic King, only in the greater importance which the Davidic kingdom acquired in consequence of the entanglement of the nation with the Assyrian empire. These complications were, for the whole course of its history, pregnant with more serious consequences than its earlier struggles with the neighbouring peoples. It was during this period that the great central event, the division of the kingdom, happened. Upon the government of the king, upon his policy and upon his situation with regard to Assyria, his dependence or independence, hung mainly the fortunes of the kingdom. We see how, according to Isa. vii., the unhappy choice made by Ahaz brought threatened punishment; how, when Hezekiah listened more to the counsels of his nobles than to the word of the Lord, and concluded an alliance with Egypt, there followed the announcement of greater calamities (Isa. xxxii.); and how, on the other hand, his unreserved decision for Jehovah was the deliverance of his kingdom. No wonder that in such times the eye of the prophet was fixed chiefly on the kingdom. The Assyrian empire assailed the kingdom of God generally in its king, in whom its power was concentrated, and by whom it was represented. Therefore Messianic prophecy now made its future prosperity, in spite of the hindrances which the Assyrian power threw in its way, to depend on the coming of the Messianic David, in whom the theocratic kingdom should be perfected according to the existing idea. It would be easy to

point out in detail from Isa. ix. and Mic. v. how the Messianic kingly authority is expressly represented by the prophets as that by virtue of which the kingdom of God could victoriously realize its highest condition *in defiance of the Assyrian power*. But when the prophets sketched the picture of the Messianic King, giving prominence to the idea that through His government justice and righteousness should prevail in the kingdom, and that the knowledge and reverence of Jehovah should be greatly advanced, they could not but perceive how little the efforts of Hezekiah and the best wishes of the king could accomplish.

Let us now follow the further development of prophecy concerning the Messianic King. Unmistakeably there is a pause from the later prophets to the period of the exile. Certainly the Messiah meets us in the prophecies of Jeremiah, at the end of one of his announcements belonging to the time of Jehoiachin, respecting the wicked and unfortunate kings Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, and Jehoiachin (xxiii. 5–8), also in the predictions of blessings uttered shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem (xxx. 9, 21, xxxiii. 15); and so with Ezekiel in xxi. 32, xxxiv. 23–31, xxxvii. 24. But He no longer stands, as with Isaiah and Micah, in the centre of the picture drawn by these prophets of the kingdom of the latter times; and perhaps there is only one idea expressed in a new form, namely, when the close relation of the Messianic King to Jehovah is represented as a priestly one (Jer. xxx. 21). On the other hand, there are Messianic predictions in Jeremiah

and Ezekiel in which, as in Amos, the subject is no longer the person of the Messiah, but merely the Davidic government by a succession of kings (Jer. xvii. 25, xxii. 4, xxxiii. 17, 21, 22; Ezek. xvii. 22–24, xlv. 8, xlvi. 16–18). We find, too, that Messianic prophecy in its narrower sense here falls back to the early stage of its development. The other prophets of the Chaldean period—Zephaniah, the author of Zech. xii.–xiv., Obadiah, and the author of Isa. xxiv.–xxvii.—do not speak of royalty in connection with the Messianic kingdom at all,—an important proof that in the consciousness of the devout of that time the idea of the theocratic kingdom had lost much of its significance. On the contrary, the chief source of the Messianic predictions of these times is once more the idea of the people of God. Does not this pause, or rather the retrogression, spring from the fact that royalty was visibly declining in power and influence? The fortunes of the nation were not to the same extent as in the Assyrian period dependent upon the king. Even a pious king like Josiah could only postpone the approaching calamities of the State (2 Kings xxii. 15–20, xxiii. 26, 27; Jer. xv. 4). The last kings, moreover, so far as they were able, did their share in bringing about the ruin of the nation, though substantially it was in the hands of those great powers who were struggling for empire, and to whom its rulers owed their elevation. Jehoiakim owed his authority to Pharaoh Necho; Zedekiah, to Nebuchadnezzar; the government of Jehoahaz was brought to an end by the first, and that of Jehoiachin

by the last of these two monarchs. Those who had at heart the interests of the kingdom of God could not any longer look upon royalty under the influence of heathen rulers as a pillar of the sacred edifice; at least this must have been so when the king, as was the case with Zedekiah, showed himself to be utterly powerless against his nobles. The book of Jeremiah permits us to see distinctly that he was afraid to follow out his own inclinations, lest he should bring upon himself their displeasure (Jer. xxxvii. 17, xxxviii. 14–19). The consideration that from the circumstance of the times the kingdom was no longer the factor which influenced the course of history, is also the reason why Messianic prophecy during this period did not place in the foreground the culmination of royalty in the person of the Messiah, as the chief instrument in the completion of the kingdom of God, though it still speaks generally of the Messiah, and “represents the exaltation of the house of David by divine gifts and grace only as an additional blessing to be added to the lot of the chosen people” (23).

In the time of the exile the hopes and prospects of the future separate themselves from the Davidic kingdom. In Isa. xl.–lxvi., that “gospel before the evangelists” in which the Messianic predictions of the old covenant in many respects reach their fullest development, there is *nothing* about the future Messianic King; neither is there in Isa. lv. 3–5, where the promises of grace made to David are appropriated to the people of God. Compare 2 Sam. vii. 8–17, Ps.

xviii. 44-47, 50, with Isa. xliii. 10, xliv. 8. In those times when the divine kingdom was overthrown and sacrifice had ceased, neither kingship nor priesthood, but the prophetic office alone, could be considered the centre of national and religious life, the vital factor which guaranteed the continuance and regeneration of the kingdom; and to it must the eyes of all be directed who waited for the promised salvation, if they sought a divinely given pledge for the fulfilment of their hopes. But the prophetic office was not a permanent institution. The gift of prophecy was possessed only by those whom Jehovah had called; and individual historical personages, one or more, could not be considered as bearers of the Messianic salvation. Their position in the kingdom depended upon their being, as chief representatives of the idea of the people of God, more than others influenced and enlightened by the Spirit of God, while the gift of the Spirit was promised to the whole congregation. Therefore all Messianic prospects now associated themselves with the people, but in such a way that the nation is regarded as an agent of Jehovah charged with a prophetic mission to mankind. Instead of the Messianic King, clothed with the fulness of divine power and authority, victorious over all His enemies, we have the servant of Jehovah who with unwavering faith, enduring patience, and firm hope, bears his testimony in the midst of deep humiliation, and reaches exaltation and honour only through suffering. He stands now in the centre of every picture of the future. He is the instrument through whom God

will re-establish His kingdom on the earth in great power and glory, and will carry out His purposes of mercy respecting the entire family of man (24).

On the other hand, as soon as the nation was restored, and Zerubbabel, a prince of the house of David, was placed at its head, we see in Hag. ii. 21–23, and Zech. iii. 8–10, predictions of a Messianic King once more revive (25), and we shall have occasion to speak of the remarkable manner in which these predictions were renewed by the later prophets. With Malachi, in whose time there was no prince of the house of David, it again disappears, at last, not on account of historical relations, but only *in consequence of acquaintance with the prophecies already existing as sacred writings*, to reappear in the book of Daniel, and throw fresh glory around the superhuman character of the person of the Messiah. After there had long been no native king, and the house of David had sunk into obscurity, the ancient prophecies having deeply implanted the expectation of a Messianic King, the Messiah is no longer proclaimed as a branch from the root of David, but as a person in human form, related to the saints of the Most High as their royal head, around whose advent is a veil of mystery, but whose superhuman character is indicated by the assurance that the Son of man—as is said of Jehovah Himself—will come in the clouds of heaven to be divinely invested with supreme authority in the eternal kingdom of God, to be raised on the ruins of *all worldly empires* (Dan. vii. 13, 14) (26).



*Reflections on other Elements of Messianic Prophecy.*

Our review of the history of the development of prophecy respecting the Messianic King has confirmed our position. But a much more striking confirmation awaits us, if we consider at what time and under what circumstances the idea of the priesthood became more significant in its relation to Messianic prediction. During the entire period previous to the exile, the priest has now and then a place in the representations of the future greatness of the kingdom of God (Jer. xxxi. 14, xxxiii. 18-22); but never, not even in Ezekiel, is there ascribed to the priestly office any co-operation in the accomplishment of the divine purposes. The reason is, that originally the priesthood was appointed mainly as the conserving force of a legally arranged condition of the national cultus and religious customs; and during the time of the monarchy it exercised no specially prominent influence upon the course of the history of the kingdom of God. The influence of the high priests Jehoiada (2 Kings xi. 12) and Hilkiab (2 Kings xxii.) was temporary and exceptional, though even here the interference of these men in the disposal of the kingdom was based less upon their office as priests than upon the personal influence derived from their official position. When, further, Messianic prophecy, from the time of the exile, shows us the nation in the attainment of its destiny as a mediatorial priestly people standing between God and the rest of mankind (Isa. lxi. 6, lxvi. 21), it is

still essentially the idea of the peculiar people of Jehovah (Ex. xix. 6), and not the idea of the special Levitical priesthood, that is the starting-point of this announcement. And yet the priests, and especially the high priests, as holy persons, consecrated, entrusted with the work of propitiation, the mediatorial representatives of the congregation before Jehovah, were *τύποι τῶν μελλόντων*. There lay also in the idea of the priesthood a vital germ of Messianic knowledge, which is unfolded immediately *after the return from exile*. The rebuilding of the temple, and the restoration of the temple worship, was at this time the centre of all national theocratic interests and efforts. In it, according to prophecy, God's care for His people was concentrated. When Jehovah guaranteed the completion of the temple, He also assured the continuance and future completion of His kingdom. In these circumstances, the priesthood had much greater importance with respect to the future than before. The high priest Joshua, especially, stands independently by the side of Zerubbabel, a descendant of David, as no high priest ever did before in the presence of a king; and both, cheered by prophetic encouragements, labour with united zeal in the erection of a habitation for God, and in the restoration of the kingdom. These historical conditions reflect themselves in Messianic prophecy. It now makes the priests, whose official character is purity and holiness, and who in virtue of their office approach Jehovah, patterns of the whole congregation of the future, the members of which, cleansed from sin like

priests, come near to God; and the high priest, in particular, it presents as a type of the Messiah standing at the head of the people (Zech. iii. 8-10, vi. 11-13). The conception of the latter is decidedly that of a priestly king, not certainly in that he offers sacrifice in atonement for the sins of the people, but to the extent that he himself is in a special degree a consecrated person belonging to God, and entitled directly to approach Him, and is also the head and representative of a priestly people cleansed from guilt and sin. In this respect, not the Davidic Zerubbabel, but the high priest Joshua, is a type of the Messiah. There is yet another ground for this. The prophet Zechariah does not, as is usually supposed, represent the Messiah as uniting in his own person the kingly and the priestly office. On the contrary, he shows us the *Messianic priest* sitting by the side of the Messianic King upon His throne in the kingdom of the future, as did Zerubbabel and Joshua, working together for the wellbeing of the people of God and the interest of His kingdom. The prophet represents the government of the Messianic kingdom as a unity, but at the same time as kingly and priestly. The unity is maintained, not by the concentration of both offices in one person, but by the elevation of the high priest to the throne of the Messiah, and their united conduct of the government (Zech. vi. 13) (27). This close connection and common government of king and priest indicate that not Zerubbabel, but Joshua, is the type of the Messiah. In the prophecies of Malachi

also we find that the idea of the priesthood has now taken a prominent place in Messianic expectations. As this prophet in his censures has special reference to the priesthood, the offerings, tithes, etc., so also he represents the chief end of the judicial coming of Jehovah to be the purification and renewal of the Levites, that so the offerings of a regenerated people, being presented by a holy priesthood, might be well-pleasing unto God (Mal. iii. 3, 4).

Still another Messianic expectation originated during the exile, and found expression in subsequent times. It was, that the divine kingdom of the latter times will be set up, that Jehovah Himself may come to hold His court in the temple, and make it His dwelling for ever. The appearance of this prophecy at that particular time is due to the fact that the national and theocratic interests were specially directed to the restoration of the temple, and the hope that it would realize its ancient glory. Even Ezekiel had spoken of the entrance of the glory of the Lord into the new temple (xliii. 2-7). The "great unknown" had assured Jerusalem of the speedy coming of the God of Israel (Isa. xl. 9-11, lii. 8, lx. 1, 2, 19, 20). But it was reserved for Haggai and Zechariah so to place in the very centre of Messianic hopes the beauty and glory of the temple, that it results in the conversion of the heathen (Hag. ii. 7-9; Zech. vi. 15). The energy of the Messiah is specially mentioned as engaged in the erection of the temple (Zech. vi. 13 compared with iii. 9, iv. 7, 10), and at the beginning of the Messianic

times Jehovah Himself will arise from His holy habitation, and take up His abode in the midst of Jerusalem for ever (Zech. ii. 14, 15, 17). But with Malachi this coming of Jehovah or the angel of the covenant into His temple, in which as the restorer and guardian of the covenant—hence his name—He holds His court, cutting off the transgressors from amongst His people, and taking to Himself those who are really His, is the chief idea of His prophecy (Mal. iii. 1–5, 16–18) (28).

These proofs will suffice to show that, in the wisdom of God, the course of history and the change of historical relations served from time to time to unfold the various germs of Messianic knowledge contained in the Old Testament religion, and from *various centres* to direct attention to the salvation which was to appear in the fulness of time (29).

(b) *The Parallelism between the course of the History of the Kingdom of God and the Development of Messianic Prophecy.*

It remains now to discuss the second point, namely, that in which the influence of contemporary history makes itself felt in the ideal contents of Messianic prophecy. The history of the Old Testament commonwealth is itself the progressive carrying out of the plan which God had sketched for the accomplishment of His purposes of mercy. By His leading and government, Israel was to be prepared for the fulfilment of its mission and

the reception of His salvation. His general government of the world, so far as it influenced the history of other nations, had for its end the realization of His purposes with regard to the Jews. In various periods of the history there came to the light of day, in a very striking manner, sometimes one and sometimes another principle of the divine government, corresponding to the varying character of the moral and religious condition of Israel, its external situation and national relations. The moral order of the world, presiding over history and dictating its course, declares itself successfully against the different directions and ends which human liberty pursues, so that first one and then another of its eternal truths demonstrate above all others their intrinsic excellence. The march of history is influenced here by one and there by another of the eternal thoughts of God, the sum of which forms the immutable programme of the King of kings. In its progress there comes into the light from the obscurity of the secret counsels of God, new turning-points and new views of the plan which He has laid down for the accomplishment of His gracious purposes. Indeed, history itself is the accomplishment of this plan, and in its progress continually unfolds it. The prophet recognised the divine teleology in the history of his times. To his enlightened eye, there was opened a vision into the reason and purpose of what God was doing in the present and what He was about to do in the future. Those divine thoughts, which found expression in the history of his times and in the new

phases of the divine counsels which had their beginning in the events of that history, for Him stepped forth from the dark maze of the day's occurrences with peculiar brightness. To notice the signs of the times and to point them out to others, to be the interpreter of the same to His contemporaries, and to tell what God said to His people in the facts of history, was the essential business of the prophet. With the psychological origination of Messianic prophecy it cannot be otherwise than that the *divine idea, which at the time of the prophet controlled the course of history*, and with which therefore his mind was specially occupied, should be *the ground-thought giving to His Messianic predictions their particular contents and character*. For the same reason, new historical conditions, new "signs of the times," will give to Messianic prophecy new ideas. *New perceptions of the gracious purposes of God, and of the way and manner in which He will fulfil them, will dawn upon the prophets as often as in the progress of history new events are unfolded*. Hence the parallelism pointed out in the earlier part of this discussion, and the equal steps to be observed in the progress of the kingdom of God, and the development of Messianic prediction.

These remarks may be confirmed by a few examples. The attention of the reader may be first directed to the *predicted entrance of the heathen nations into the kingdom of God*. The universalistic tendency lying in the Old Testament religion was at first restrained by its strictly national form, and by the sharp contests into which the

Jews had to enter with other nations. Israel was like an arrow hidden in the quiver for future use (Isa. xlix. 2). We find, too, that the Messianic predictions of the elder prophets were essentially narrow. With Joel, the locality of the kingdom of God to be set up on the earth is the little country of Judah ; the ten tribes are altogether unnoticed, and there is not a word to indicate that the heathen nations will share in Messianic blessings. They are noticed only as enemies to the kingdom of God, exposed to His destroying judgments, which fall only upon the neighbouring nations, including Egypt; the distant Sabæans, for example, remain untouched (Joel iii. 8). With Amos, the kingdom of the future stretches not only over the whole of Palestine, but over the neighbouring countries which had once been under the dominion of David; and for this reason with him Edom is not to be desolated, as with Joel, but only reduced to subjection. But here also the receiver of the Messianic blessing is Judah, under the leadership of the house of David ; Ephraim, through its union with Judah, takes its share; but their heathen neighbours have simply to acknowledge the authority of the people of God and the house of David. In like manner, Hosea assigns the blessings of the Messianic reign to Israel only. In Zechariah we meet, however, with an extension of Messianic prospects beyond the borders of Israel (ix. 9, 10). The *King of peace* is there represented as exercising His benign government over other nations, even unto the ends of the earth. It is worthy of notice that the



doctrine of universality contained in the *idea of the theocratic kingdom comes prominently forward first in this passage*. Strictly speaking, the first distinct prediction of the entrance of the heathen into the kingdom of God is contained in those remarkable words preserved to us by Isaiah and Micah, which point to the mountain of the Lord's house as rising above all others, the centre of the earth to which the nations desiring salvation will go to be taught by the God of Jacob, and to walk in His ways (Isa. ii. 2-4; Mic. iv. 1-5). In this there is a clear recognition of the fact that the revelation given to Israel was designed for universal man. It is an unknown, elder prophet, by no means Joel, as many have thought, who in these words for the first time claims for his God the kingdom of the whole earth, and publishes to all nations the message of His salvation. But he can hardly belong to a much earlier date; for the circumstance that the two chief prophets of the Assyrian period, Isaiah and Micah, reproduce his words, show how new and remarkable such a prediction still appeared, while in the older prophetic writings, as already remarked, it has no parallel. In Isaiah and Micah we find the universalistic idea frequently expressed, and in Isa. xix. 18-25 it is unfolded in a very remarkable manner. The prophet shows us the kingdom of the latter time embracing the whole then known world; its three divisions under the blessed government of Jehovah, and Israel, His inheritance, as it were, the original nucleus forming the central point; on one side Egypt, now belonging with its

people to God ; on the other side Assyria, now also the work of His hands, neither any longer struggling for supremacy, but dwelling together in peaceful intercourse and in the service of Jehovah. We see that as long as Israel only came into close contact with the nations in her immediate neighbourhood,—as long as the purpose of God to make the sovereignty established in Israel not merely a national but a world-wide dominion remained without *indication in the facts of history, so long Messianic prophecy had nothing to say* of the future extension of the kingdom of God to all nations. Only when the successful efforts of Assyria to establish her empire bound up the *fate of Israel* and the kingdom of God with the *destinies of all the nations* of the known world, did this divine purpose come to the light for the information of those who could discern the signs of the times. From that time Israel was placed, as it were, on a hill, visible to all nations from afar, the theatre of great historical events. Henceforth there is the clear, full recognition of the fact that God's dealings with Israel concern all people (Isa. viii. 9, 18, iii. 7, xxxiii. 13); Isaiah brings within the circle of prediction the history of the world, and occupies himself in detail with the destiny of foreign nations, and in Messianic prophecy is included the idea of the universality of the kingdom of God. Indeed we may venture to go still further, and affirm that as Assyria was destined to interfere in the history of Israel, that unknown to herself she might be the instrument of carrying out the will of God, so also she was intended indirectly to promote the develop-

ment of a knowledge of His purposes of mercy; for the idea of a universal monarchy originated not with Israel, but with Assyria. By the claim of her kings to an empire which, according to their arrogant and supercilious notions, no power human or divine should withhold or diminish (Isa. x. 13, 14, xxxvi. 18–20, xxxvii. 11–13), the prophets were led to draw the inference from the Old Testament idea of God that such authority belonged rather to Israel's king. When the universal monarchy of Assyria, already in part realized, came into conflict with the kingdom of God, so also the latter was conceived of as a universal theocracy taking the place of other kingdoms and uniting all nations in itself.

Ever after, the universalistic idea of the Messianic kingdom had a prominent place in Messianic prophecy; it was so with Zephaniah (ii. 11, iii. 9), with Habakkuk (ii. 14), with Zechariah (xiv. 9–16), with Jeremiah (iii. 17, iv. 2, xii. 15, 16, xvi. 19–21, xlv. 28, xlviii. 47, xlix. 6–39). With Ezekiel, on the contrary, though the universal idea is not wholly absent, there still prevails—in harmony with his Levitical standpoint—the old exclusiveness. Prophecy respecting the participation of the heathen nations in the blessings of the Messianic salvation made the most important progress during the exile. In Isa. xl.–lxvi. we have its richest results. After Israel had really been scattered among the nations, and her devout sons in their continued intercourse with the heathen had the vanity and folly of idol-worship brought constantly before their eyes, and were made all the more deeply

conscious of the treasure which had been entrusted to them in the knowledge of the only true and living God and of the victorious power of truth, not only would their assurance that at no distant time all nations would acknowledge Jehovah, and His kingdom, spread over the whole earth, be raised to the highest point; but the consciousness would be aroused that Israel was called to be a light to the nations, to carry the knowledge of the true God to all people. Here also, then, there grew for Messianic prophecy out of these new historical relations a new idea, the rich contents of which "the great unknown" has alone developed, though his successors, the prophets after the exile, repeated the prediction of the conversion of the heathen, but without the wider and deeper exposition which he had given to it.

A few other proofs of our last position may in conclusion be briefly pointed out. With the prophets of the Assyrian period (Isaiah and Micah) the idea is characteristic, that only a remnant will return and enjoy the blessings of the Messianic salvation. This ground-thought of their predictions is one of those divine purposes brought into prominence by the history of the period. By the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes the chosen people were first reduced to the cities of the kingdom of Judah, and of them the judgments which swept over that kingdom through the instrumentality of Assyria, a remnant—Jerusalem and those who had fled thither—was spared (Isa. xxxvii. 4, 32). In the Assyrian period the truth came into

the clearest light, that the most powerful empire could not destroy the little kingdom of God, nor bring to nought His purposes toward Israel; on the contrary, it was seen that all such attempts must end in the overthrow of the aggressor. That victory belonged to the right hand of the Lord was proclaimed distinctly, both by the history of the Syro-Ephraimitish war and the campaign of Sennacherib. This is the key-note of Isaiah's Messianic predictions. To him the coming triumph of Jehovah over the power of Assyria was as clear as if it had already been an accomplished fact. The victorious power of Jehovah and His Anointed is everywhere the prominent feature of his pictures of the latter times. By it all external foes are destroyed, the impenitent transgressors are put down, and the way prepared for the establishment of the kingdom of the future.

The close connection between prophecy and history is further shown very clearly by the fact that those prophecies, which give the prospect of a new covenant between Jehovah and His people, and clearly and distinctly describe the kingdom of the future as differing from the one already existing (Jer. xxxi. 29-34, iii. 16, 17), were uttered by that prophet, who, unlike his predecessors, must have convinced himself of the defective nature of Old Testament institutions, and saw approaching the inevitable destruction of the existing kingdom. Jeremiah had seen that even the reformation of Josiah was insufficient to keep the people from apostasy after his death, and it was evi-

dent that the external law could not maintain them in continued allegiance to God. After Josiah's death, both king and priest contributed to the ruin rather than to the establishment of the State; and the genuine prophets, in conflict with a band of pretenders to the office, were not in a position to prevent the catastrophe, though they held the power which would one day accomplish the regeneration of the people. Then it was that, beholding the destruction of the existing kingdom, they perceived the truth that the kingdom which should endure for ever must be of an entirely different character. *The divine judgments Jeremiah had to pronounce were to him an assurance that old things were passing away in the existing form of the kingdom of God, and that all things were becoming new.*

Further, during the exile, the kingdom, ruined according to outward appearances, and without external aid or support from the servants of God, was maintained solely by the power of living faith and stedfast allegiance in the midst of the heaviest trials. And we find prophecy then announcing that only through such means could the kingdom of the latter times be ushered in (Isa. xl.—lxvi.). As in the history the victorious power of Jehovah and His human instruments were absent from the scene, that according to His divine purpose a conclusive victory might be obtained by continued allegiance to Himself, and willing fulfilment of the imposed task in manifest submission; so *in the prophecy the idea now appears that faithfulness*

unto death, and profoundest humility in suffering, is for the servant of God the path to glory.

In conclusion, we may add that, from the nature of the case, the greatest sufferers during the exile were the true worshippers of Jehovah; they had most to endure from the heathen authorities, and had to bear, in addition, the hatred and persecution of apostates. These devout persons, in whom the idea of the people or servant of God was most fully realized, were certainly not blameless; they acknowledged in the name of the people, and in their own name, that the sorrows of the exile were the just punishment of their sins (Isa. lxiv. 4-7). But still in faith and confidence they remained stedfastly devoted to their God; and so far as they truly represented the idea of the people of God, they had not deserved exile; and all that they had to endure on account of their faithfulness to Him was unmerited suffering. They represented what the people of Israel, having fallen away from the divine idea and denied their calling, had deserved. Upon them, the ideal people of God, fell the penalty incurred by the faithless. Against those who in the midst of Israel were the true people of God—the relatively righteous representatives of the unrighteous—the wrath of God displayed itself. *Their sufferings were a substitutionary bearing of the guilt and punishment of Israel's self-will*, an expiatory offering for the sins of their people and for their sake (Isa. lxx. 8); and on account of the faith and patience shown in affliction, the covenant-keeping God could not leave His people

for ever in the power of their enemies. Having regard to the patient endurance with which they bore the outpouring of His indignation against the sins of the nation collectively, He must for their sake bestow upon the nation generally the tokens of His grace. Their vicarious sufferings were a chastisement designed to accomplish the salvation of the whole people. Thus the historical circumstances of the exile give us a fresh view of God's gracious purposes; *there comes into prominence the doctrine that Israel and mankind generally owe their salvation to vicarious suffering, which the innocent servant of God, in the faithful discharge of his prophetic office, will endure for the sins of others, and which is for himself the divinely ordained path to glory* (Isa. liii.).

We now see how history always co-operates with prophecy in bringing into the light one phase after another of the divine purposes, and in giving continually clearer and more definite disclosures of the end of the way of God.

So much for the limiting and deciding influence of contemporary history upon the contents of Messianic prophecy. We are now more fully prepared to examine its relation to New Testament fulfilment.



### THIRD SECTION.

#### ON THE RELATION OF MESSIANIC PROPHECY TO NEW TESTAMENT FULFILMENT.



ACCORDING to our preceding researches, they misunderstand the historical character of Messianic prophecy who think they have before them in its various products the creating force of the revealing spirit efficaciously working in a direct manner, binding itself by no law of historical development, but throughout constantly producing in a supernatural manner knowledge absolutely new. The religion of the Old Testament commonwealth, based on God's revelation of Himself, is, so to speak, the mother earth from which it springs and from which it draws its nourishment. We recognise in it the new blossom and fruit which, by virtue of the revealing and enlightening power of the Spirit of God, it has organically unfolded from the germ which the Old Testament religion had in it from the beginning. In the course of time these flowers and fruit have presented to our eyes a rich variety of form and colour. The reason of this variety we find not only in the mental peculiarities of the prophets, but also in the forming and deciding influence which

historical conditions and relations exercised upon the contents of the predictions. As every prophet regarded his age in the light which was thrown upon it by the end of the way of God, so also he saw the glory of the latter days reflected only in the broken rays and colours in which the atmosphere of his own historical period permitted them to appear. In like manner it arose from the same historical conditions and relations, that Messianic predictions made their chief starting-point now one and now another of the ideas embodied in the Old Testament religion, and that through the development of the germ enclosed therein, first one and then another side of the latter-day glory was brought into prominence. And finally, the divine ideas which, as outlines of the government of the world, or as sketches of the plan of God's kingdom, decided the course of history in the times of the prophets, are the same which gave to Messianic prophecy its peculiar character and contents; and in the measure they give light in the course of Old Testament history indicating new development, there comes to the prophets new knowledge concerning the purposes of God, and the means by which He will accomplish them.

From the vantage ground of our knowledge respecting the internal organic and genetic connection of Messianic prophecy, on the one hand mainly with the Old Testament religion, and on the other with the history of the period of its development, we now address ourselves to define its relation to New Testament fulfilment. And here it may be well once more

to remember that the contents of the prophecies, that is, the sense in which the prophets themselves understood them, and in which they wished to be understood by their contemporaries, is to be kept separate from the reference, intended in the counsels of God and historically revealed, to a fulfilment through Christ. Into the former nothing of the meaning must be imported which is first discovered by us when, in the light of the New Testament, we look back to the general course of Messianic prophecy. On the ground of this entire separation between Old Testament prediction and New Testament fulfilment we have to consider both their difference and their unity.

1. *The Historical Features of Messianic Prophecy.*

That Old Testament prophecy and New Testament fulfilment do not completely cover each other, or rather, that the latter goes beyond the contents of the former, is not, even from the standpoint of a one-sided supernaturalistic criticism, called in question, though the tendency to reduce the difference to the smallest possible amount by the introduction of New Testament knowledge is closely connected with such criticism, and always more or less makes itself felt in exegesis. On the standpoint indicated this at least is presupposed, that the prediction is perfectly covered by the fulfilment. They say that individual Messianic announcements are partial in their character, because the prophets were only shown that which in the existing

relations was conformable to the purpose and sufficient for the end in view, and that their predictions at all times gave expression only to that which they had seen. They are fragments, but fragments capable of being united into one harmonious picture, a complete painting of the Messianic salvation and the manner of its approach,—a process all the easier, inasmuch as in the history of the fulfilment we have the guiding threads which show us where each individual feature must be placed. The prophetic picture may have gaps here and there, and it may fail to give a distinct view of the glory of New Testament times ; but in prophecy there can be no feature presented which has not in the fulfilment its corresponding lines accurately expressed. Otherwise the prophets have not really spoken the word of God, and have not written exclusively that which He permitted them to see. This is essentially Hengstenberg's view of the relation of prophecy to its fulfilment (1), and the necessary result is that spiritualistic evaporation of the concrete historical and specific Old Testament features of Messianic prophecy, the inadmissibility of which we have already sufficiently shown. Having regard to the results of our previous researches, we must consider this view untenable. It seems to us that the undertaking, which aims to bring every feature of Messianic prophecy into one picture, and to trace the fulfilment of every particular in Christ, is as unauthorized as it is impracticable. The individual features of Messianic prophecy are to be understood in their true historical sense, as is proved by the

various forms assumed by Messianic ideas in the course of their development, in accordance with the then present historical relations. They do not resemble the fragments of a picture,—a picture which is remarkable only for the lifeless, formal, and mechanical representation of a one-sided supernaturalism,—but the varying phases of the development of a vital organism. As in the course of the growth of a plant individual leaves fall off and are replaced by new ones; as in the animal world every organ in the course of its development always takes the form in which during its intermediate stage it can best fulfil its design,—so also does Messianic prophecy. Its concrete form was, at the period of its publication, so important to the historical circumstances of its time-originated relations, that without the same its design must have remained partially or entirely unfulfilled. But this importance is transitory; it is limited to the time during which those relations continue, and distinguishes the historical features of individual predictions only while the stage of development lasts to which it belongs. If the historical conditions became essentially changed, then these elements of prophecy must partly at least have had their relative historical fulfilment; and, so far as this may not have been the case, it cannot subsequently, in the sense it had for the prophets and their contemporaries, be fulfilled. Such fulfilment would have been possible only if the Messianic salvation was really as early in the purpose of God as they expected, really in the period during which the historical circumstances

of its origin remained unchanged. Later, the presupposed conditions for its fulfilment in an historical sense were wanting. Therefore, as soon as the historical relations have been changed, Messianic prophecy casts off those concrete features whether they have had a relative fulfilment or not, and there comes into prominence something new, the old with its full significance and vital power having passed away. Thus a very considerable part of the contents of Messianic prophecy is outside the sphere of New Testament fulfilment, either because it has received a relative historical fulfilment before New Testament times, or remains in general unfulfilled.

Does not this non-fulfilment of a portion of the contents of Messianic prophecy seem serious? Predictions unattested by fulfilment appear to belong not to those which come from revelation, but to those which come from human thoughts and human words having their origin in the prophet's own mind (מִלְפָּנֵי), and which are mixed with divine communications. But the fulfilment of prophecy depends generally upon the expressed or understood limitations which belong to the sphere of human freedom, and therefore many a prediction, though made known by the Spirit of God, remains unfulfilled (2). In this alone, however, we can never find an explanation of the non-fulfilment of a part of the contents of prophecy. No one will seriously maintain, that if only Israel had been faithful to God, the Messianic salvation would have been realized as early and in the precise manner which the

prophets predicted it would be, and only in this case could all the historical elements of Messianic prophecy be fulfilled. The partial non-fulfilment has not common ground in the counsels of God with the conditioning of prophecy by human conduct; for, since the blessings of salvation were to appear only in the fulness of time, the contents of prophecy could not be entirely accomplished; and it seems to us clear, that those predictions which do not correspond to the real purpose conceived and executed by God are only a disturbing element which the prophet, in consequence of the limitations of his vision, has mingled with that which was really revealed to him.

Such, in fact, must be our conclusion if to the concrete historical features of Messianic prophecy belongs *only* that signification which is limited to the time of its origin. But, on the other hand, it has its *permanent signification*, in virtue of which it is related to the new covenant, and in which it finds its fulfilment.

There are, indeed, aspects of the Messianic ideas themselves which are applied to the circumstances of particular periods. Still the temporary encloses an abiding principle; the historical covering, an ideal germ of the eternal thought of God; and when, in the further development of Messianic prophecy, the former is taken away, the latter remains; changed, it is true, into new forms corresponding with its altered relations; and these also, when their course is run, will reappear in new historical drapery. Thus, in the course of the development of Messianic prophecy, there is per-

formed a critical sifting process upon individual predictions, by which is manifested what is of essential and abiding importance as an unfolding of the divine purpose with respect to the final issue ; and what, on the other hand, is mere drapery, in which the revealed aspect of God's counsels must be brought to the consciousness and vivid recognition of the prophets and their contemporaries. The first is the peculiar substance of revelation designed for all time ; in the second we have those elements which are either only publications of such portions of the divine purposes as relate to individual *stages of the way* leading to their final completion, or are mainly *temporary instruments and vehicles* of revelation. Their partial non-fulfilment is therefore unimportant, and they by no means appear as a disturbing element which the prophets, uninfluenced by the spirit of revelation, had mingled with their predictions.

With regard to their essential and permanent contents, isolated predictions really stand in a *supplementary relation* to each other, for the historical relations of a given time have always in a greater or less degree their peculiar character. They always have their special features, which are never repeated at any subsequent time, and in their historical peculiarities is always represented either one or another phase of the divine purposes which in later predictions cease to be prominent, or, at least, they are illuminated on a side to which the historical conditions of later times give no opportunity of new light. The Messianic idea, in the course of its adaptation to the manifold his-



torical conditions, also unfolds the wealth of its contents, and every individual prediction contributes in its measure to bring that wealth into full recognition.

With regard to their ideal and permanent contents, the historical features of Messianic prophecy relate to Christ and His kingdom, and it is in reference to Himself only that the repeated testimony of Christ has any force,—*δεῖ πληρωθῆναι πάντα τὰ γεγραμμένα περὶ ἐμοῦ*. The eternal conceptions of the divine mind, which are the kernel and essence of prophecy, must in the new covenant have a full realization in Christ. Through Him is found, therefore, the fulfilment corresponding to its ideal contents, while the historical fulfilment—if it has already been found in the Old Testament dispensation—strictly corresponds to the historical concrete setting which has contained the eternal thoughts of God in their adaptation to definite historical relations, but still only as an imperfect and preliminary accomplishment of the divine purpose. It appears, therefore, that in consequence of the historical colouring of all Messianic predictions, the Messianic type forms a considerable part of their contents. The assertion that *a typic-Messianic character belongs more or less to them all, is not without foundation*.

By these remarks we believe our opinion of Hengstenberg's view, as expressed above, to be perfectly justified, and especially will they apply to his spiritualizing exposition of the prophecies. It is true that where *we have to do with the historical tendency of Messianic prophecy to fulfilment in Christ*, only the idea

contained in the historical features has essential importance ; so also it is erroneous to suppose that the historical form in which it is expressed is pure imagery. Hengstenberg's serious error consists in the fact that he does not sufficiently distinguish between the contents of prophecy and its divinely ordained tendency to fulfilment first seen in the wider course of the history of revelation and salvation, and that he misunderstands the importance of the historical sense.

## *2. The specific Old Testament Features of Messianic Prophecy.*

As it is with the historical element, so it is also with the *specific Old Testament features of Messianic prophecy*. They have their growth in the soil of the Old Testament religion. Prophetic knowledge of divine purposes of mercy to be accomplished in the new covenant unfolds itself from Old Testament conceptions, in virtue of their being originated psychologically. These gracious purposes can therefore be made known only as they appear from an Old Testament standpoint ; and the prophetic representations of the coming of the kingdom of God can never fully emancipate themselves from the conceptions of the existing condition of things. To some extent, every prophet will conceive and represent the establishment of the divine kingdom as the perfection and glorification of that already known to him ; and in some measure, also, will every prediction have a specific Old Testa-

ment colouring, decided by the source from which it has sprung (3). These specific Old Testament elements of Messianic prophecy are by no means mere imagery in the prophetic consciousness; they are rather the forms in which is contained the knowledge of God's merciful purposes. Certainly in many cases the prophet has a more or less clear consciousness of the fact that these forms do not suffice to clothe the corresponding ideas, and not unfrequently do features present themselves which, though borrowed from the existing state, the prophets could not understand literally, and it was manifest that the idea rather than its external form was most important; the latter in such cases at once passed into the sphere of conscious symbolism. We may mention, for example, the prediction that all who were left of the Gentile nations after the divine judgments upon them (Zech. xiv. 16-19), should *every year* go up to Jerusalem to keep the feast of tabernacles, or that all nations should journey thither *every Sabbath and every new moon* (Isa. lxvi. 23). And in the representations of the perfected kingdom of God, which otherwise remain within the limits of Old Testament forms, we find individual features bearing such marks of transition as would hardly justify us in considering the whole as purely allegorical. With Ezekiel, for example, in whose description of the coming kingdom occurs the well-known prediction concerning the water issuing from the house of God, and changing the Holy Land into a paradise, the idea transcends, in a remarkable manner, Old Testament

forms, and permits the latter to appear merely as symbolic drapery. But in general the prophet was unable to make a conscious distinction between Old Testament forms and the divine idea contained therein. He conceived of the one in the drapery of the other, and was not in a position to draw aside the veil (4). But what he was unable to do was in a great measure accomplished by the general course of the development of prophecy, when in its prominent points the knowledge of God's gracious purposes was freed from bondage to Old Testament forms. Indeed, we usually find later prophecies placing the counsels of God and the true character of His kingdom in a clearer and more perfect light. In the Messianic predictions of the more recent prophets the germ of the eternal purpose of God is, on the whole, seen more and more distinctly through the Old Testament veil. Though, for example, the oldest Messianic prophecies adhere to the national exclusiveness of the then existing kingdom, those of the Assyrian period paint it as covering the whole earth and embracing all peoples. But especially in Jeremiah and the later Isaiah do Messianic predictions reach a high point of development, at which we find a marked distinction between the Old Testament economy and the new dispensation of the future clearly understood and expressed. This, however, was only limited and conditional, sometimes because of the extent in which Messianic knowledge lay hid in specific Old Testament forms, and sometimes on account of the peculiar standpoint of individual prophets ;

for Ezekiel, the contemporary of Jeremiah, has succeeded only in the very slightest degree in presenting the people of God in the future Messianic kingdom without the institutions and ordinances of the Old Testament. We find also that in the course of the development and advancement of prophecy there were periods of retrogression ; as, for instance, after the exile the subjection of Messianic knowledge to Old Testament forms of representation was much greater than in the time of Jeremiah and the later Isaiah. The high degree of development in which Messianic prediction in general, or with respect to more particular information, approached nearest to New Testament knowledge, is most distinctly manifest to those who are living in the time of its fulfilment. From this point of vantage the essential unity of the entire body of Messianic prophecy, unfolded by various steps in history, will be clearly perceived. By the light which falls from these upon the lower heights, many Old Testament elements appear to be but transient forms of the divine purposes, belonging to the historical features, not to the substance of revelation itself,—they were purely temporary or isolated means of revelation, having permanent importance only in virtue of their symbolic character. When, for example, according to Ezekiel, sacrifices, including the sin- and trespass-offering, will be continued (xl. 39, xlii. 13, xliv. 29, xlvi. 20), Hosea and Isaiah teach us to distinguish what belongs to the veil of Old Testament phraseology,—the former, when he exhorts the penitent

people to offer not sacrifices, but "the fruit of our lips," that is, praise to God (xiv. 3); the latter, when (excepting xix. 21) he never speaks of sacrifice and priesthood in connection with the future people of God. When, also, Ezekiel represents the distinction between the priesthood and the laity as still more sharply marked than before (xliv. 19), other prophecies, like those of Jeremiah, tell us that all will draw near to God and be acknowledged of Him (Jer. xxxi. 34). The later Isaiah says that Israel shall be a nation of priests, and all her children taught of God (Isa. lxi. 6, lxvi. 21, liv. 13); whereas, as an Old Testament element of Ezekiel's prophecies, this promise is only of limited application. And though he describes most minutely the new temple to be built at Jerusalem in which God would dwell amongst His people, and though in a similar manner the prophets after the exile attach great importance to the completion and adornment of the temple as a dwelling-place worthy of God, we have on the other hand Jeremiah's declaration that in the Messianic kingdom there will be no ark of the covenant, no unapproachable Holy of Holies, but that the holy city itself will be the throne of Jehovah, and all nations will assemble there to worship the manifested God (Jer. iii. 16, 17). In the light of this assurance the other representations appear as Old Testament forms, which, as mere drapery, the higher development of Messianic prophecy has taken away. The criticism which examines Old Testament prophecy as a whole, and thus comes to a

knowledge of the detail of its peculiar contents, will separate a large proportion of its specific Old Testament features—its merely temporary form—from the thought therein contained ; and it is evident that the first must fall outside the sphere of New Testament fulfilment, while the second must find its accomplishment within. Consequently the sphere of the Messianic type—that which has its fulfilment in Christ, not according to the historical, but according to the ideal sense, as taught by Old Testament prophecy itself—includes also a great part of the theocratic representations contained in it (5).

3. *Old Testament Conceptions still adhering to all  
Messianic Predictions.*

But are we to suppose that this evolution of the divine purposes of mercy—the fruit of historical development from the temporary external forms of the Old Testament—is to come to a perpetual end with the cessation of prophecy ? Was it not to be expected that those purposes would first come into the full light of day by their actual fulfilment, and therefore that the complete rending of the Old Testament veil by which they are surrounded in Messianic prophecy could not take place before that event ? So, as a matter of fact, we find it to be. Even at the high degree of development attained, Messianic prophecy could not be freed from *all* specific Old Testament forms. Some of them pervade the entire body of prophecy, and, in

the light of New Testament fulfilment, appear as mere drapery of the ideas, the carrying out of which had been decided in the purpose of God.

*(a) Jerusalem, the City of God.*

To this class belongs the representation that Jerusalem, the city which Jehovah had chosen for the habitation of His name, should in the last time be the seat of the revealed and gracious presence of God upon the earth, and as such remain the centre of His kingdom. There He would dwell among His people, and from it He would exercise His authority over all nations; there also He is manifest to the heathen, and there they worship Him. In the prophecies of Jeremiah the idea is firmly held, that the revealed presence of God will no longer be associated with the ark of the covenant and the unapproachable Holy of Holies (Jer. iii. 16, 17). And in like manner it colours all other Messianic predictions of the Old Testament, and exercises its influence to a greater or less extent upon the details of the picture of the Messianic kingdom. Certainly Jerusalem, as the place where the Mediator of the new covenant presented His all-sufficient and eternally efficacious sacrifice, where by His resurrection He proved Himself to be the Prince of life, where the Holy Spirit was poured out upon His disciples, has become the chief theatre of the fulfilment of God's purposes, and as such it is in a certain sense the central point of the New Testament kingdom, toward



which the gaze of all interested in God's revelation of mercy through Christ is directed. So far, the selection of Jerusalem has been justified by New Testament fulfilment; so far, also, these representations running through Old Testament prophecy have been sealed as corresponding to the purpose of God. But only so far; neither at Jerusalem nor in any other region of the earth has the kingdom of Christ, which is "not of this world," an external, visible centre like that of the Jewish commonwealth. With the coming of Christ the hour arrived when Jerusalem as well as Gerizim lost its pre-eminence as a place where men ought to worship; when "worship in spirit and in truth" released them from all obligation to place, times, and external forms (John iv. 23, 24). The express declaration of Christ and the actual present character of His kingdom compel us to recognise, in the statement that Jerusalem would be the permanent seat of divine revelation and worship, mere Old Testament imagery which Messianic prophecy could not cast aside; and for this reason, that it was in *close connection with a local and earthly, though divine kingdom*,—a circumstance to the consideration of which we shall have occasion to return. For the same reason the sacred city retains in the New Testament a typical signification. As the Jewish theology distinguished between the lower Jerusalem (יְרוּשָׁלַיִם נֶשֶׁל-מִטָּה) and the upper (יְרוּשָׁלַיִם נֶשֶׁל-מַעְלָה) and heavenly Jerusalem, of which the former is only the image and symbol; and as Philo's speculative idealism has found in the holy city an image of the world as a habitation

of God and sphere of revelation, or of the soul of the wise in which He dwells (6),—so the New Testament represents the heavenly Jerusalem as the antitype of the earthly, and thus points out, in opposition to the Old Testament idea of the future kingdom represented by the same imagery, the supersensuous kingdom of Christ associated with the heavenly world as a state wherein is enjoyed the essential presence of God and full fellowship with Him; a state already existing in the Church on earth, but fully to be realized for a time only in heaven, then coming down with the second advent of Christ (7). In the new covenant this heavenly Jerusalem takes the place of the earthly, which was only a type; and the New Testament writers, casting aside the Old Testament veil, have applied *the predictions concerning the glory of the earthly Jerusalem to the kingdom of Christ* (Gal. iv. 27), and have found in them especially the establishment of the same in its completeness and glory after the advent; the numerous features of which in the Apocalypse, borrowed from the last chapters of Ezekiel and from the later Isaiah, are the most striking examples.

(b) *Israel the Central Point in the Kingdom of God.*

Shall we find it otherwise with the representations, which in a similar way permeate all Old Testament prediction, that Israel, as the chosen nation, would in Messianic times retain its national peculiarities and be the sustaining centre of the people of God, exercising

royal authority, and holding the office of mediator between Jehovah and the rest of mankind? In prophetic announcements of such contents, a system of interpretation which in early times was but little prevalent, but popularized by Bengel and his school, and more recently much favoured in England and Germany, being advocated by Mich. Baumgarten, J. T. Beck, Auberlen, v. Hofmann, Delitzsch, Stier, and others, will recognise prophecies which in the future, when the *καιροὶ ἐθνῶν* have run their course, will fulfil themselves in Israel as a nation in their full word sense.

“The Israelitish nation is called,” it is said, “by virtue of its election, to be through all time the receiver and dispenser of divine revelation, and as a royal and priestly people to stand towards the rest of mankind in the relation of a mediator with God.” It is true that Israel in Old Testament times received divine communications. Christ and His apostles were Jews, and so far her calling was fulfilled; but the purpose which God had in view in the choice of Israel had not thus been fully accomplished, nor had the promise been fulfilled that Israel should one day as a holy nation exercise its priesthood for all peoples. In the new covenant this destiny is said still to be theirs, and to them the promise still remains; and that it does so notwithstanding their rebellion against the revelation of God in Christ, and their temporary rejection, for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance (Rom. xi. 29). This promise looks onward to the last times, in which the kingdom of God shall appear in its full

glory. After its present period, the time of the Gentile Church, when the millennial kingdom has been set up, Israel, converted and gathered from the dispersion, will in the Holy Land take its place at the head of mankind. The divine revelation, silenced since Israel's rejection, will once more utter its voice; then, what the glorified priestly kings are in heaven the kingdom of priests will be on earth, and then first will the chosen people fulfil their destiny and realize their long predicted glory (8). It is the natural consequence that some advocates of this view should expect in the millennium not only the restoration of the scattered Israelites to the land of Canaan, and the re-establishment of Jerusalem as the chief city of the kingdom of God, but also the building of the temple described by Ezekiel, and the resurrection of the ceremonial and political law of Moses (9). This conception of Old Testament prophecy, which is opposed to the orthodox, spiritualistic, and allegorizing interpretations which have prevailed since the third century, is worthy of respect as an important step in advance in modern exposition of the prophetic word of God; a step, too, which justifies the true historical sense of prophecy quite as much as it does "biblical realism." To some extent this may seem doubtful. There can, however, be no doubt that in the abandonment of the common spiritualizing method, and in a nearer approach to a severely historical interpretation, considerable progress may be recognised; but if no distinction is made between the temporary individual outward form and the ideal and permanent con-

tents, and without further ceremony the historical sense is regarded as the peculiar substance of prophecy, the pure unveiled publication of the divine purpose concerning the final completion of His kingdom, I can then no longer regard it as a mark of progress, but as *retrogressive Judaizing error*. It is an *overestimate* of the importance of the historical sense which rests upon the same *one-sided supernaturalistic conception of prophecy* as the unhistorical spiritualizing method of interpretation of the older orthodoxy. With this, therefore, it shares in the erroneous supposition that Old Testament prediction must be perfectly covered by New Testament fulfilment, and every individual feature of its contents find its corresponding accomplishment. Both are equally responsible for mingling the Old and New Testaments together; one takes New Testament knowledge into the sphere of the Old, the other brings over what belongs to the old covenant into the region of the new.

We cannot here give particular reasons for this opinion. The reply to the supposition upon which the above view rests may be found in the remarks concerning the nature and the historical character of Messianic prophecy contained in the earlier parts of this book. We will, however, present a few general considerations, from which it will easily be seen (10) that it is untenable and without foundation, and then in what follows limit ourselves to a positive statement of the case.

And first, it is absolutely impossible to reconcile this view with certain consequences. Among the Old

Testament elements of Messianic prophecy are many things which the most decided advocates cannot suppose are likely to be fulfilled in their full historical sense, and they are compelled to take refuge in the old allegorical interpretation. We may recall, for example, the distinct assertion respecting the difference between priests and people, and the privileges to be enjoyed by the successors of Zadok, and also the presentation of the sin-offering and of the sacrifices generally mentioned in the Messianic predictions of Ezekiel. Here the maintenance of the above view would lead to the most palpable contradiction, not only of the clearest testimony of the New Testament, but also of the Messianic predictions of the Old Testament itself; and here, therefore, must the allegorical method be called in to explain. But certainly the inconsistency of supposing that such features are to be interpreted spiritually while most others are to be understood literally, belongs not to Ezekiel but to his expounders, who bring with them "a false key for understanding the prophetic words" (11). But still further, Bertheau has strikingly shown that the announcement of "the national glory of Israel" in various prophecies stands almost throughout in closest connection with that part of their contents which connects itself with the historical circumstances of the time in which they originated, and that therefore the expectation of their literal future fulfilment can only be consistently maintained on the supposition that the historical relations will be restored also. But this is impossible, for the historical events of the one

time exclude those of the other ; and before the restoration of the kingdom of Israel the strange supposition would bring back the Assyrian and the Babylonian empires ; the Philistine, the Edomite, the Moabite, and the Ammonite would once more appear upon the plan of the world's history, and once more we should have the division between the kingdom of Judah and the ten tribes. No one admits this, and therefore recourse is had to the traditional allegorical method of explanation. And what a fruitful source of inconsistency is this ! We are to understand literally that Israel will be restored to Canaan, and there, under the government of the Son of David, become a flourishing and powerful state in the centre of the kingdom of God ; but we are not to understand literally the declaration connected with it, that the remnant of Edom, of the Philistines, the Ammonites, and the Moabites will submit themselves (Amos ix. 12 ; Isa. xi. 14). When Isaiah describes the kingdom of the future as a universal theocracy embracing the known world, and consisting of three powers independent of each other, but dwelling in peaceful intercourse and equally serving Jehovah, Israel as the favoured inheritance in the midst, and Assyria and Egypt on each side (Isa. xix. 23-25), we are to take what is said concerning Israel literally, and as intended to be fulfilled in its full sense, but not that which refers to the two latter countries. Generally, when Israel is mentioned, we are to think of the Israelitish nation ; but when other nations are named, the word of prophecy does not mean the historical

people who are known to us by that name, but it presents them to us as types of the world-power which stands in opposition to the kingdom of God! Thus this view of prophecy falls into the error of the allegorical method of interpretation, which it aims to improve, and on account of its incompleteness and inconsistency is still less tenable than the system it endeavours to correct.

It will be clear also, from the above remarks, how much this view of prophecy mistakes *its historical character*. Especially does it fail to perceive, that for the prophets and their contemporaries imminent events became transfigured by the light which fell upon them from the end of the way of God, and that approaching times of salvation and deliverance were frequently pictured as if their dawn were the break of the millennial day. The genuine historical consideration of these predictions has evidently in such cases to distinguish between the publication of the grace and mercy of God to the people of Israel, designed for a more or less near future, under given historical conditions, and the ideal form and colour derived from the flowing into each other, in the consciousness of the prophet, of the promised blessing and the glory of the latter day. It will therefore, from the nature of the case, perceive that the historical fulfilment of the predictions given to Israel must be only relative to their inner significance and external glory, and considerably inferior to the picture sketched in the prophecy; it will see also that prophecy, *according to its ideal contents*, must find



a higher, fuller, and final historical fulfilment; but it will never be able to discover in that fulfilment a complete outward correspondence with the *general word sense* of the prediction; neither will it refer the concrete elements of prophecy which relate to the approaching fulfilment in the history of Israel to that ideal content, and so wait for another and more brilliant accomplishment; nor will it without ceremony take for granted that the ideal contents of prophecy also refer specially to the Israelitish nation, and will be fulfilled to it as such. There is also an utter neglect of the instruction which the wider course of the history of the kingdom of God gives concerning the difference between the temporary and the final historical element in the contents of the prophetic writings, when it is said that what is predicted concerning Israel's conversion and glorious reinstatement in the beloved land has only been imperfectly fulfilled in the return from Babylonian exile, and the subsequent troubled existence of the Old Testament kingdom of God, and that therefore its more complete realization, so far as it is believed (12) to be still unfulfilled, is to be expected in the future gathering of the converted Jews into the Holy Land, and in the glory which will then cover them. Here what belongs only to the early steps of the temporary historical fulfilment is carried over to the final fulfilment, and what is really the beginning of the accomplishment of divine purposes is put to the account of their final completion.

It may further be observed, that *analogy is against*

*this idea* of the relation of prophecy to the future exaltation of the kingdom of Israel. We have seen that in Messianic prophecy there are important stages with respect to the maintenance of Old Testament forms. At the high points of its development many of these forms are cast off, and we are warned not to expect a fulfilment of certain predictions corresponding *to their literal sense*. Now, instead of following these finger-posts, and judging the external forms running through Old Testament prophecy according to this analogy, this view in favour of the literal sense limits and narrows the contents of the more fully developed New Testament knowledge just as soon as it is consistently applied. Instead of judging the letter according to the unveiled revelations of the spirit of prophecy met with here and there, the revelations themselves are by the vindication of the letter veiled and darkened. But there remains a more perfect analogy, with which the above view is inconsistent. It has already been pointed out that, according to the evidence of the New Testament, this idea is connected with the representation, that in Messianic times Jerusalem will be the habitation of Jehovah, the seat of revelation, and the central point of His kingdom; also that this prediction, as it runs through all Old Testament prophecy, is indissolubly associated with the announcement of the future glory of the people of Israel in their own land. If, now, by the establishment of Christ's kingdom, the prediction concerning the glory of Jerusalem has proved itself historically fulfilled,—when it brings

with it the divinely ordained, partly symbolic, but yet organic historical connection of the Old and New Testament kingdom and people of God,—while it still has a symbolic meaning for Christ's kingdom, we must interpret the prediction of Israel's exaltation in the Holy Land not in opposition to, but in harmony with, this analogy.

In addition, we may remember that the view of our opponents in favour of the Israelitish nation denies to *the Church of Christ* the greatest part of those predictions which have been to it a source of consolation and strength. It is affirmed that the promises given to Israel as the chosen people of God,—and they form the great majority,—are designed to apply not only in their historical sense, which we unfeignedly believe, but also in their divinely designed revealing and saving efficacy, to the final deliverance of Israel as a nation. The Gentile Church is to consider these promises as belonging to it only in an indirect manner: the only promises directly available being those concerning the entrance of the heathen into the kingdom of God, to share in the blessings given to the Jews; and this would give them the privilege of applying to themselves the prophecies originally vouchsafed to Israel for the time of her future glory. Not from "Gentile Christian pride," but in grateful acknowledgment of God's mercy, as we shall soon see from New Testament evidence, will the Church protest against such a result, and also against the doctrine which leads to such heterodox conclusions. Still further; this view, in order

to exalt Israel, takes from *Christ Himself* His rightful glory. For if the Jewish nation is permanently appointed as the mediator on behalf of mankind, and is to fulfil this destiny in the millennium, and “secure for the nations in a different and more perfect manner than before the blessing of communion with God,” Christ is no longer the one Mediator between God and men; the mediatorship of Israel interposes between Him and the human family, and in such a way that the full virtue of His office is made dependent upon Israel. And if the conversion and deliverance of Israel be “the true resurrection of the Gentile nations,” then the full revelation and work of Christ as the *πνεῦμα ζωοποιοῦν* for the nations and the Gentile Church is conditional upon the conduct of the Jews, and upon their future faithful fulfilment of their calling. If, moreover, this view were taken of these prophecies, which its advocates are accustomed to regard as directly Messianic, while they really, at all events in their historical sense, refer to Israel as the people of God, and of those which refer to the servant of God, it would be still more clearly manifest how such over-estimate of the importance of the historical sense of prophecy necessarily ends in dishonouring the name of Christ, and misunderstanding the all-sufficiency of His work.

Many advocates of the view we are opposing do not, however, go so far, for example, as Auberlen has gone. They do not expect a fulfilment of the predictions concerning Israel’s national glory in their literal sense.

That many of them, in the light of New Testament fulfilment, appear to be veiled in Old Testament drapery is admitted, and only the general idea is retained, that Israel, in her dispersion among the nations of the earth, shall be maintained as a separate people that she may accomplish her final destiny, and, when the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, listen to the call of the gospel, and once more take her central position in the divine kingdom (13). This position is maintained partly in consideration of the fact that Israel in her dispersion has to this day a separate national existence (14), and partly from the evidence of the New Testament. The view thus modified and sustained robs the above remarks of their force, and it remains for us, therefore, to ascertain whether this altered front really has in its favour the evidence of the New Testament; and we now turn, therefore, to positive representations respecting the subject in question.

Old Testament prophecy certainly only knows "a temporary rejection of Israel, which is so ordered that, as a people, they are not destroyed, but preserved for future restoration" (15). But for a correct appreciation of this fact, two things at least must not escape our attention. The prophecies availed nothing to the Jewish nation as such, to Israel after the flesh, but were in force only so far as they were really the peculiar people of God. Hence the predictions respecting the sifting and purification of the nation by divine judgments, and also of the remaining remnant from

which the chosen seed should be renewed. Partly by the extermination of impenitent transgressors, and partly by the repentance of the rest and the general outpouring of the Spirit, was the collective Israel to become the true Israel to whom the promises belonged. And with this there is another truth associated, namely, that in the prophetic consciousness of the continued existence of *the Israelitish nation* generally, the maintenance, relatively, the restoration of a *people and kingdom of God on earth*, was indissolubly connected. What, indeed, was fulfilled *before the time* really so happened, that Israel's unfaithfulness might not render the work of God of no effect, and so necessitate its recommencement. The maintenance of the people and kingdom of God on earth was doubtless the principal thing with the prophets, though, when they predicted the future deliverance of Israel from the power of the heathen and the restoration of the Israelitish commonwealth, they did not consciously distinguish between the two. From this it is clear that it does not *correspond with the real meaning of the prophets*, to conceive of the promises given to their Israel, as the peculiar people of Jehovah, as if they referred to the converted Israel as a nation, *in distinction and opposition to the people of God, gathered in the meantime out of Israel and from the Gentile nations*.

If the predictions given before and during the exile concerning the deliverance of Israel from the Assyrian and Babylonian captivity, the return to their own land, the rebuilding of the temple, and the re-establishment

of the ruined kingdom, are mentioned as standing in the way of the above view, it is sufficient to reply that they were fulfilled to Israel as a nation in the time of Zerubabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, and therefore vanish from the contents of the post-exilian predictions, in which we find only a solitary announcement of deliverance and restoration to those in the east and in the west, that is, to those in all lands who were still imprisoned and dispersed (Zech. viii. 7, 8) (16). This fulfilment did not long correspond, however, with the ideal picture which prophecy had sketched of the re-establishment of the kingdom of God; a result which can only be partially regarded as arising from the fact that Israel did not fully return to Him. It arose more from the circumstance that this re-establishment had presented itself to the prophetic consciousness as the final completion of the kingdom of God. Especially did the prediction, first brought into prominence by the later Isaiah, fail of being fulfilled, that Israel, as the servant of the Lord, by its prophetic and priestly calling, should be the instrument of accomplishing God's purposes of mercy towards all nations, and should itself realize its destined priestly and kingly glory. This difference between the historical fulfilment and the much more splendid contents of the prophecies, was for the author of the book of Daniel an enigma, the solution of which was given to him not by his own reflections, but by divine revelation (Dan. ix.), and indicates that the deliverance of Israel from the power of the Chaldeans, and the restoration of the

kingdom, was only the beginning of the fulfilment of prophecy, and that the people of God had still to expect its full accomplishment; and so we find that the task of prophecy after the exile was to keep alive amidst troublous times the confident hope of the future completion of the kingdom of God.

This hope was not in vain. A far-reaching advance on the road to the fulfilment of the predictions of the later Isaiah is discernible in the fact that Israel, in the latter centuries before Christ, and especially through the Alexandrine Jews and the translation of the divine oracles into the language of the whole civilised world, exercised a remarkable influence upon the religious ideas of both Greeks and Romans, and many seeking souls among the heathen nations were led to the knowledge and worship of the true God. But the promises given to Israel as the people of God, so far as they related to the completion of His kingdom, were not accomplished before the fulness of time. Salvation came from the Jews (John iv. 22). Christ and His apostles belonged to the Jewish nation, and the sphere of His personal activity was among the lost sheep of the house of Israel. To the Jews His salvation was first offered, they formed the groundwork of His Church, and were the first to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the message of that gospel which, while it was also intended for their scattered brethren, was equally the heritage of the Gentiles. Thus the predictions *given to Israel* relating to the kingdom of God were fulfilled. In the national relation of Christ



to Israel, and in the organic connection of His Church with Jehovah's chosen people, has it been historically sealed, that when the prophets declared the promise of Messianic salvation to be given to the people of Israel, they expressed the purpose of God. The election of the Jews, and the idea of their central position in the kingdom of God, as well as that of their being the medium of revelation and salvation to the people, have in the New Testament fulfilment been abundantly justified.

But it is not Israel collectively, not the nation as such, that is to share in the blessings offered to it, but only a remnant, an election, while the rest reject salvation through the crucified and risen Saviour with impenitent obstinacy (Rom. xi. 1-10). Now, therefore, went forth against Israel *as a nation* God's sentence of rejection, and His kingdom, as the Lord Himself had predicted, was given to the Gentiles. The people of God still continued, but not in Israel as a nation, but in the New Testament Church formed out of "the remnant" of Israel and believers among the Gentiles, who, as citizens and members of the family of God, were received into His kingdom. Now the idea of Israel as a nation, and the idea of the people of God, hitherto inseparable in the mind of the prophets, begin through historical fulfilment to be distinguished from each other. Besides the Israelitish nation, which for the present dispensation at least has ceased to be the people of God and the preserver of divine revelation, there stands a "peculiar people" which took its rise from the Jews, and which, according to prophecy,

originated in the "remnant," but gained its position and preference by the accession of believers from the heathen nations. Who is now the true heir to the promises given to the Old Testament Church as far as they remain unfulfilled? That their fulfilment is still future, so long as the kingdom of Christ does not include all nations, and the inner glory of His Church is not fully manifested, is certain. Clearly, the present rejection of Israel cannot be identified as the same as the earlier temporary rejection at the time in which the continuance of the kingdom of God upon earth depended upon the existence of the Israelitish nation. If we apply what the prophets predicted in view of their earlier rejection to their present condition, we should ignore one of the most far-reaching historical facts, and miss the key to a correct estimate of the prophetic word of God; and, as we have already seen, we should fail to catch the sense which the prophets themselves attached to their predictions, should we consider them as belonging not to the New Testament Church, but to the Jews as heirs of the promises yet to be fulfilled. In the light thrown upon prophecy by its fulfilment, the New Testament Church appears to be the only lawful heir. Israel having been the medium of salvation to all nations, has accomplished its destiny, and has fulfilled its mission of revelation and salvation; its prophetic and priestly work has been perfected for ever in Christ and His apostles. Henceforth it participates in the promises given to the people of God only so far as it belongs to the Church of Christ, and

in a similar manner and under the same conditions as converts from the Gentile nations; that is, *individual Israelites* have part therein, and that without preference, only as through faith they become members of the New Testament Church. As a nation, since its rejection of the gracious visitation of the Messiah, Israel has had no further saving work to accomplish, and prophecy gives it no prospect of restoration as a nation, no central position in the kingdom of God, no exaltation to honour in the Holy Land.

In reply to the objection, that in the Old Testament the choice of Israel is said to be permanent, it is to be remembered, first, that by the Israelitish descent of Jesus Christ and the origin of the Christian Church, the election of Israel really becomes a fact of eternal significance; it is a parallel case with the choice of the house of David which is spoken of in the Old Testament in a similar manner, and which, in the fact that Christ was of His posterity, is regarded as being fully accomplished. In support of the above view of Israel's rejection as a nation, it may be said that עַד-עוֹלָם has only a relative signification, as, for instance, in Isa. xxxii. 14, and also where the Old Testament writers use it absolutely; and the further development of the history shows it to have had a limited meaning. So it was with the eternal priesthood of the sons of Aaron and the privileges attached to it (Ex. xl. 15; Num. xviii. 19, xxv. 13; Jer. xxxiii. 18-22); so also with the eternal choice of Jerusalem and the habitation of Jehovah itself, and in like manner with the election

of the Israelitish nation for ever. A faithful covenant-keeping God maintains the same until He has brought His people to the epoch He had in view ; but having reached it, "the choice for ever" cannot, in the further development of His purposes of mercy, bind Him instrumentally to use the people who by their rejection of the offered salvation have become unfit, and in whose place He Himself has in the New Testament Church prepared a different organ.

This view of the case has *the witness of the New Testament in its favour*. It testifies throughout that the promises of God were given to the Israelites, and that therefore their fulfilment—the salvation of God in Christ Jesus—was in faithfulness offered first to them, and that afterward, in pure mercy, His gospel was made known to the heathen nations. (As may be seen from a comparison of the antithesis *ὑπὲρ ἀληθείας Θεοῦ* and *ὑπὲρ ἐλέους* in Rom. xv. 8, 9.) And with the apostle of the circumcision (Acts ii. 39, iii. 25, 26) the apostle of the Gentiles agrees both in word and deed (Acts xiii. 46 ; Rom. i. 16, iii. 1, 2). Equally united are they in testifying that the Church of Christ belongs no longer to Israel as a nation, but that it is gathered from among both Jews and Gentiles to be a holy nation and a peculiar people unto God (1 Pet. ii. 9, 10 ; Rom. ix. 24–33 ; 2 Cor. vi. 16 ; Tit. ii. 14) (17). It is the true Israel of God (Gal. vi. 16 ; Rom. ix. 6–8), the true seed of Abraham (Rom. iv. 16, 17 ; Gal. iii. 7, 29, iv. 28) ; therefore the promises made to the Israel of the Old Testament are

regarded as theirs, and find fulfilment in them (Rom. ix. 25, 26 ; 2 Cor. vi. 2, 16-18 ; Gal. iv. 27). That the entrance of Jew and Gentile into the New Testament Church established no sort of difference in their enjoyment of the blessings of salvation, but introduced the former heathen as fellow-citizens with the saints and fellow-heirs of the promises given to the seed of Abraham, is often expressly taught by the Apostle Paul (Rom. iii. 29-31, x. 12 ; 1 Cor. xii. 13 ; Gal. iii. 28, 29, vi. 15 ; Eph. ii. 11-22 ; Col. iii. 11). In this full recognition of the equality of the Gentiles with the Jews in their relation to Christ and to God, and in their enjoyment of the blessings of salvation in *connection with the complete abolition of the Israelitish character of the kingdom of God*, consists the *new* knowledge of which the apostle speaks (Eph. iii. 5) as not having been in possession of former generations, namely, the entry of the Gentiles into the kingdom of God, their national fellowship with Israel and enjoyment of the blessings of salvation, realized through Israel their special possessor (18). With this unequivocal evidence of the New Testament, the notion of the mediatorial priestly function of Israel when converted is in no way reconcilable. On the other hand, it does not exclude the idea that, without prejudice to this equality, Israel as a nation may take a high position in the perfected kingdom of Christ. It is not without foundation that the relation of Jew and Gentile has been compared to that existing between man and wife (19). But then the New Testament should

bear witness to this abiding feature of the Jewish nation as distinctly as it does to the equality between Jew and Gentile. Naturally such testimony might be expected in its prophetic book, the Apocalypse; but we look for it in vain. In distinction from the innumerable multitude of conquerors from all the nations of the earth, there are the 144,000 servants of God chosen out of the twelve tribes of Israel who had been preserved in the preceding judgments, and who were to enter as victors into the kingdom of glory (Rev. vii. 4-9); but in the representations given of the kingdom of God in the last stages of its development, and especially in the statements respecting the millennium, the distinction between Israel and the Gentiles disappears; nor is there any mention of the conversion of the former. Prophecy turns to the consideration of the kingdom of Christ in its heavenly completeness, drawing its imagery from Jerusalem, the ten tribes, and many features of Israelitish prosperity and greatness. The assertion that this obvious omission may be supplied from the Old Testament is without value, except as an admission of the fact for which we plead (20). For it is in itself a decisive proof that the seer who took his stand on "biblical realism," and believed in the fulfilment of the promises of a faithful God, could not have understood Old Testament prophecy to give prominence to so important a matter as the re-establishment of the Israelitish nation in its former central position in the kingdom of God. But what cannot be found in the Apocalypse may be discovered

in the writings of the apostle of the Gentiles (Rom. xi. 25-36, with which compare ver. 15) (21). Here it is taught in the clearest manner, that the rejection of Israel will only continue until the fulness of the Gentiles is gathered in, and that then all Israel will be converted and saved. Here we have for unbelieving Israel a prediction full of hope, and we find it sustained and strengthened by an appeal to a promise given to Old Testament Israel, which opens a prospect of complete forgiveness, declares that the Jews should be "beloved for the fathers' sakes," and that God would not recall His gracious bestowments and His call to salvation (Isa. lix. 20, 21, xxvii. 9). In fact, according to the testimony of the apostle, Israel's election and the promises given remain in force with respect to the rejected people, and that they have not forfeited for ever their natural claim to the kingdom at first founded among them and for them, and will at last come into their inheritance. But we must beware of putting into the text what it was never intended to contain. There can be no doubt that the apostle speaks of Israel as a whole; but the elevation of the Israelitish nationality, its reorganization into a magnificent and united people with all its peculiarities, is not in the words *πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ*. He discourses also of the regrafting of the Israelites into the kingdom of God, of their salvation, and their renewed enjoyment of the divine favour; but he says nothing of their saving mission in the history of the future, nothing of their central position

in the kingdom of God, nothing of any special grandeur by which they were to be distinguished, and nothing whatever of their re-assembling in the Holy Land, and the re-establishment of the Israelitish kingdom (22). In this connection it is worthy of notice also that the apostle refers to those predictions which give to Israel not the prospect of political exaltation, but that of pardon and the enjoyment of God's grace. To whom, indeed, could the Jews stand in a prophetic and priestly relation? The apostle places their conversion and *restoration precisely at the period when the fulness of the Gentiles has been gathered in* (23). So little did he know of a saving mission to be discharged by Israel to the nations, that he regards the manifestation of divine mercy to the latter as the means whereby the former is converted and made a partaker of the same precious grace (Rom. xi. 14, 31). Manifestly, this restoration is of such a nature as will agree with the saying, "and the first shall be the last," and depends, as ver. 32 clearly shows, upon the final universality of the blessings of salvation, only that for Israel this hope, on account of its election and the promises given to it, has special consolation (24). The election and the promises remain in force so far as they guarantee that Israel shall not, on account of its rebellion, be rejected for ever, that the salvation of Christ shall not be irrevocably refused by them, but that at last they will be partakers of its blessings. In this chapter there is no preference over believing Gentiles promised to the Jews (25). The New Testa-



ment justifies and demands that we should distinguish, in the predictions of the prophets concerning the future glory of Israel in its own land, between Old Testament conception and the eternal thoughts of divine mercy. And this view of the case has been in the Israelitish origin of the world's Saviour, in the organic historical connection of the New Testament people of God with Israel, in the preservation of Israel's right of inheritance to salvation, confirmed as corresponding to the purpose of God. And so far as these predictions remain unfulfilled, they fall, considered in the light of the new covenant and the word of God in the New Testament, into the sphere of Messianic type. All that prophecy says, according to its historical sense, about the glory of the Israelitish kingdom in the latter times has its divinely intended reference to the future greatness of the Church of Christ, the New Testament people of God; and the fact that prophecy presents this prospect to the gaze of the Israelites, is but the Old Testament drapery which clothes the divine idea (26).

The view, much advocated in modern times, but by no means well established, that the Davidic descent of Christ will not stand before a critical examination of the evangelic history, lies very near the question, whether the *Davidic descent of the Messiah* belongs to the closely adhering forms of the Old Testament, to which, according to the tenor of New Testament fulfilment, belongs only a symbolical signification; and an appeal is made to the separation of Messianic hopes from the Davidic kingdom, and the appropriation by

the later Isaiah of the promises given to David to the people of God, as well as to the fact that Daniel does not characterize the Messiah as David's son. But from what has already been said, an answer must be given in the negative. The Davidic origin of the Messiah stands on a level with the doctrine that salvation is of the Jews. If the truth and faithfulness of God is not to be called in question, in this we must find the New Testament fulfilment of the election of the royal house of David and the promises given to him. On the other hand, there are certainly individual features of Messianic prophecy, the essence of which is first eliminated from their external forms by fulfilment. Especially prominent in this connection is Malachi's prediction, that the prophet Elijah should go before the Lord when He should come bringing judgment and mercy (iv. 5, 6 ; see also iii. 1). The prophet can hardly have called the forerunner Elijah only in the sense in which the Messiah is spoken of as David, that is, a second David (Hos. iii. 5 ; Jer. xxx. 9 ; Ezek. xxxiv. 23, xxxvii. 24). Much rather does the expectation, already widespread at the time of Christ, among Jews, Mahometans, and Christians, and continuing until the Reformation, *of a personal return of the translated prophet Elias*, answer to the idea of the prophet. But that this prediction was fulfilled in John the Baptist is evident both from the evangelists, whose report respecting the appearance and preaching of John is intended to point out his similarity to Elijah, and from the testimony of Christ

Himself (Matt. xi. 14, xvii. 10-13). Thus here also, in the light of New Testament fulfilment, there emerges from the typical form in which it came into the consciousness of the prophet, the essential ideal contents of his prediction; and in the significant *εἰ θέλετε δεῖξασθαι* in Matt. xi. 14, Christ Himself points out the difference between understanding prophecy in the literal historical sense and perceiving its true essential contents, and thus recognising its present fulfilment(27).

4. *The Measure of Knowledge of Redemptive Purposes shown in Messianic Predictions.*

In presenting proof of this incongruity between Old Testament prophecy and New Testament fulfilment, founded upon the temporary and specific Old Testament elements of the contents of prophecy, that is, on their typical and symbolical character, we have by no means fully pointed out the difference between the two. In Messianic prophecy there is *no full recognition* of the coming fulfilment in the new covenant of God's purposes of mercy; the actual accomplishment of the same is their full revelation. The chief reason of this incompleteness, though not the only one, is to be found in the fact that prophecy, while at various times it makes now one and now another of the ideas contained in the Old Testament religion, and embodied in the Old Testament, state its central-point, and brings its Messianic contents into further development, recognises, in a fragmentary manner only,

*individual phases of the divine purposes without being able to place them in the connection in which, during the course of fulfilment, they become one united whole.* What the Apostle Paul says of the New Testament prophets, *ἐκ μέρους προφητεύομεν* (1 Cor. xiii. 9), applies much more fully to those of the Old Testament, and still more prominently do we find in Messianic prophecy the *πολυμέρως* of which he speaks to the Hebrews (i. 1). We shall endeavour to ascertain as fully as it can be done, in the brief space which remains, how far the knowledge of the divine purposes about to be fulfilled in the new dispensation was given in Old Testament prophecy, and to what extent it failed to come up to the height and richness of New Testament fulfilment.

(a) *The Measure of Knowledge in relation to the ultimate Position of the People and Kingdom of God.*

The New Testament salvation comes nearest to what has been predicted of the *perfect state of the people and kingdom of God*. Especially in the older prophets prominence is given to the external aspect of Messianic salvation, and it is always conceived of as the result of perfected fellowship with the Almighty; still, not unfrequently do we find spiritual deliverance mentioned as the principal thing to be enjoyed by the future people of God. The complete and universal *forgiveness of sin*, in consequence of a new and all-sufficient manifestation of the pardoning mercy of

God, a radical change of heart and life, resulting from the outpouring of the Spirit of God upon all ranks of the people, and His abode in the heart, are the things which come more fully into prominence with the development of prophecy as the principal blessings of Messianic times (Joel ii. 28-32; Isa. xxix. 18, 24, xxx. 19-21, xxxii. 3, 4, 15, xxxiii. 24; Mic. vii. 18, 19; Zech. xii. 10, xiii. 1-9; Jer. iii. 21-23, xxiv. 7, xxxi. 29-34, xxxii. 39, 40, xxxiii. 8, l. 20; Ezek. xi. 19, 20, xvi. 63, xxxvi. 25-29, xxxvii. 23, xxxix. 29; Isa. xlv. 3). The covenant of Israel with Jehovah is completed in an immediate, personal, loving intercourse of every individual with Him who then dwells in their midst for ever, manifesting Himself in all the fulness and glory of His grace, proving His gracious presence by the bestowment of salvation and blessing, directly enlightening and governing all by the powerful operation of His Spirit, making them His instruments, and honouring them with intimate fellowship and confiding communications, so that only the extraordinary experiences of the Spirit's work and revealing power which come within the sphere of prophecy will take precedence of what is common to all (Joel ii. 28-32; Hos. ii. 18-23; Jer. xxxi. 31-34; Isa. liv. 7-10, 13, lxv. 24). Then will the people of God be a truly holy (Isa. iv. 3, xxxv. 8; Dan. vii. 18, 22, 27) and priestly people (Isa. lxi. 6, lxvi. 21), a righteous community (Isa. lx. 18-21), and the children of the living God (Hos. i. 10). The law will no longer be in the form of

state regulations with appended threatenings, separating between the people and God, but it will be written by the Spirit of God upon every heart ; that is, every man will then carry within himself a vital operative knowledge of the divine will as a more powerful incentive to a holy life, and so the new covenant will last for ever ; for there will be no danger of its dissolution through the unfaithfulness of the people (Jer. xxxi. 31-34, xxxii. 40). With this completion of the covenant, the entire Old Testament arrangements for divine worship, and, indeed, the whole Old Testament economy, will be changed. The office and work of a special order of prophets and priests as the medium of revelation and mercy, the connection of the gracious presence of Jehovah with the sanctuary of the temple and an external sacrificial service, falls away as something belonging only to the present and still incomplete form of the covenant (Jer. xxxi. 34 ; Isa. liv. 13, lxi. 6, lxvi. 21 ; Jer. iii. 16, 17 ; Hos. xiv. 2 ; Isa. lvi. 7). In these deep glimpses, peculiar to Jeremiah, into the nature of the kingdom of God as distinct from the Old Testament economy, is the implied recognition of the fact that, in its essential character, it is not a national political organization, but above all a spiritual kingdom, the members of which have fellowship with God. Elsewhere it is described rather in the form it will finally assume, as a kingdom in which God Himself will, in a more perfect manner than in the existing state, carry on the government. Then we have it spoken of

as the people of God, holy and purified from all that distinguishes the kingdoms of the world, and all within it obey the divine will and are devoted to His service (Zech. xiv. 20, 21). Justice and righteousness, truth and peace, prevail therein. Its holiness will also be represented externally with the greatest glory (28), and the rich abundance of earthly blessings will correspond with its spiritual prosperity; for from Him who dwells in the midst of His people, satisfying every desire of the human heart, shall go forth streams of mercy (29). Those who were excluded from the congregation by the law are made partakers of the blessing promised to Israel (Isa. lvi. 3-8). And especially will those blessings be shared by the nations which enter into alliance with the people of God, when His kingdom, extending itself through the earth, becomes a universal theocracy. Even in Old Testament prophecy there is the distinct avowal that God wills that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. The declaration, that the kingdom of God will arise from the ruin of worldly empires (Dan. ii. 34, 44, vii. 14, 18, 22, 27), represents its external completion as being realized through the instrumentality of divine judgments. And, finally, Old Testament prophecy is not ignorant of the ultimate removal from the world of all evils introduced by sin (Isa. xxxiii. 24), of the restoration of created things to their original perfection, and even to greater glory (Hos. ii. 18, 21, 22; Isa. xi. 6-9, xxx. 26, lxxv. 25), of a new heaven and a new earth

(Isa. lxv. 17, lxvi. 22), of a future resurrection of the dead (Isa. xxvi. 19), which, according to Daniel, will be twofold, one class rising to everlasting life, and the other to shame and everlasting contempt (Dan. xii. 2); so that, according to this, the last judgment includes the departed members of the Church of God.

When we consider the manifold and abundant detail given by various predictions, we cannot but perceive that Old Testament prophecy opened up a view of the ultimate condition of the people and kingdom of God which bordered very nearly upon New Testament knowledge. Still there always remained a considerable difference, and that not merely in the distinctness and fulness in which the latter always has the pre-eminence. We attach no special importance to individual cases; to such, for example, as that in the book of Daniel, in which the resurrection seems to be limited to departed Israelites,—a general resurrection of the dead being nowhere mentioned in Old Testament prophecy. Reference may also be made once more to the limits of prophetic knowledge as seen in the specific representations quoted above. Those representations are connected with another essential limitation, which consists in the fact that, notwithstanding the later Isaiah's prediction of a new heaven and a new earth, only the earthly state appears as the sphere in which the kingdom of God will be set up, and in which the state of complete happiness will be realized. The veil which hides the



heavenly world is not drawn aside. That the perfected kingdom of God includes the heavenly state which shall be open to His people, is not predicted. Prophecy places the final glory of God's kingdom *on earth*, and fails to bring to light its heavenly character ; and therefore, notwithstanding its announcement of abolition of death and the resurrection of the dead, it fails to give the comforting assurance that death will be, for the good, the entrance into perfect fellowship with God in heaven. The living hope which comes to us through the resurrection of Jesus Christ far surpasses that promised by the Messianic predictions of the Old Testament (30).

(b) *The Measure of Knowledge in relation to the means of Deliverance, especially with respect to the Person of the Messiah.*

Old Testament prophecy distinctly testifies that Israel cannot attain complete fellowship with God by its own power ; but that the realization of this blessing, and the exaltation of the people and kingdom of God to a condition of happiness, is His own work, the work of His free grace. He blots out the sins of His people, not for their worthiness, but for the sake of His holy name and for His truth's sake (Ezek. xvi. 33, xxxvi. 31, 32 ; Isa. xliii. 25, xlvi. 9, 11) ; and instead of the unsatisfactory propitiatory sacrifices of the Old Testament, He provides a new and efficient method of deliverance from sin (Zech. xiii. 1 ; Ezek.

xxxvi. 25). By the outpouring of His Spirit He brings about a penitential change (Zech. xii. 10-14), a renewal of the heart, and a voluntary and unanimous obedience to His commands. In a word, the latter day is to usher in His authority and delivering grace. But for the carrying out of His purposes of mercy He uses certain instrumentalities; and before all comes *the Messiah*, with whose advent is associated, especially in the Assyrian period, the dawn of the perfect times. But not a Messiah appearing in circumstances of lowliness and humility. Evidently it was supposed that before the dawn of Messianic times the authority of the house of David, as well as the fortunes of the people, would by the power of God be raised from the deepest humiliation, and that the Messiah would be elevated to a corresponding glory. Therefore in Isa. xi. 1 He is a branch from the decayed stem of Jesse; according to Mic. v. 1, He comes forth from little, insignificant Bethlehem; in Ezek. xvii. 22-24, He is a twig taken from the tall cedar of the house of David, which, being planted upon a high mountain, takes root and comes to be a magnificent cedar. Nor does He as a conqueror establish His power by carnal weapons, for He is meek and lowly, far removed from all self-seeking and violence; coming not upon the proud war-horse, but upon the foal of an ass, as the Prince of peace (Zech. ix. 9). But notwithstanding this, the portrait is not that of the Son of man who hath not where to lay His head, but of one who is by divine authority clad in the magnificence of royalty.

On the other hand, those descriptions of His glory fall short of that which surrounds the Messiah as He appears in Jesus Christ. Old Testament prophecy paints Him as a branch from David's stem,—a human king who rises superior to all other men, and about whose personality there is something wonderful and mysterious. It is nowhere affirmed that He will enter the world in an extraordinary manner (31); yet He appears as the representative on earth of the divine King,—as the instrument of establishing His kingdom and carrying on His government, in a peculiar and intimate relation with Him whose Spirit rests upon Him as it does upon no one else, and whose almighty power, wisdom, righteousness, and grace operate through Him in such an abundant measure, that by His government God's great name is made known. God makes Him the instrument of self-revelation, in a similar manner as He formerly did the angel of Jehovah; therefore the divine name *אל נבור* is given to Him (Isa. ix. 5); and in a more general way it is applied to the house of David (Zech. xii. 8), which is said to be *as God, as the angel of the Lord*, before the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Thus the Messiah takes a central position in the kingdom of God and the human family (Isa. xi. 10), not only as the Head, but as the Mediator through whom the magisterial authority and saving power and self-revealing activity of the divine King is exercised. In that late apocalyptic supplement to Old Testament prophecy, the book of Daniel (vii. 13, 14), the exaltation of the Messiah

over all other men, and His peculiar relation to God, is still more decidedly announced, when, without reference to His human and Davidic origin, He is described as bearing a human form, but coming like Jehovah Himself in the clouds of heaven (32). There remains, however, a wide difference between the Old Testament picture of the Messiah and the New Testament conception of the divine man (33). Great as is the glory of the Messiah as the agent through whom God reveals His name, it is not the glory of the only-begotten Son of God; the mystery that in the Messiah the eternal Son should enter the world as a man in order to carry out God's purposes of mercy, was first revealed in the fulness of the time. In Old Testament prophecy there are, side by side with the indications of a future Messiah, predictions of the final *visible manifestation of Jehovah Himself*, who comes to exercise judgment, to accomplish the full deliverance of His people, to take up His abode in their midst, and to make a full revelation of His glory and grace (34). And this visible self-revelation of God is, according to Mal. iii. 1, to be accomplished through the messenger of Jehovah, in whom His name dwells (Ex. xxiii. 21). But although this announcement resembles the other, which finds in the Messiah a similar personal instrument of divine revelation (35), they are still nowhere united; they stand together side by side as a proof of the *ἐκ μέρους προφητεύομεν*. Further evidence of this we find in the fact that the Messiah is never spoken of as the only human instrument of

Jehovah in bringing in the latter-day glory. Leaving out of consideration those Messianic passages in which the plural is used for a succession of Davidic kings, or in which saviours are spoken of in the plural (Obad. 21), there stands beside Him, sharing in mediatorial activity, the later Isaiah's *servant of God*, that is, the people of God entrusted with the prophetic calling for the race, and Zechariah's high priest. With these is divided the final accomplishment of the divine purposes, so far as they are not ascribed to Jehovah Himself.

(c) *The Measure of Knowledge in relation to the Work of the Messiah.*

It is evident that the partial nature of the prophets' Messianic conceptions must make itself felt in the representations of *Messianic salvation*. The Messiah is certainly represented as the medium through which the saving work of God is effected, but only in connection with *royal* activities within and for His kingdom. Everywhere He appears *only as King*, and His Messianic work consists in the deliverance of the people of God from the power of their enemies, the security of His dominions, the prevalence of justice and righteousness in the same, their extension into all lands, and the establishment of permanent peace. By His royal government the kingdom of God will realize its destiny, and become a kingdom in which evil shall no longer exist,—a kingdom filled with a

living knowledge of Jehovah, and therefore with righteousness and peace. In a word, *He is the medium of Messianic salvation, so far as it respects those blessings which are given to the people of God, through the full establishment of His royal government and the supremacy of the kingly authority of Jehovah.* On the other hand, the Old Testament knows nothing of the *prophetic* office of the Messiah; He makes known the will of God and proclaims it to the people, but not as a prophet teaching, admonishing, and comforting; but as a king, by instructions, by ordinances, by magisterial and mediatorial decisions (Isa. xi. 10; Zech. ix. 10). And just as little does Old Testament prophecy represent the Messiah as a *High Priest*. It is true that we read of Him drawing near to God (Jer. xxx. 21), but only in the close relation of fellowship in which as King He stood to Him, and not as discharging the priestly office. The high priest is a type of the Messiah (Zech. iii. 6); and he is set before us as a priestly king, not because he offers sacrifice for the sins of the people, but only because he is in the highest degree sanctified of God, and is the head and representative of a purified and priestly people. Still further, we find that prophecy characterizes the government in the Messianic kingdom as *kingly and priestly*, and affirms the closest union between the two; but it does so, not when it assigns the priestly office to the Messiah, but when it predicts a Messianic High Priest sitting upon His throne, and in *perfect accord* sharing in the conduct of the government (36). One may well

object when it is affirmed that the sufferings and atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ are not predicted by the prophets, as if at this point there were no connection between Old Testament prophecy and New Testament fulfilment. No one who gives more than a merely superficial consideration to the relations between the two will ever make such an assertion. Still it is true that the prophecies of the Old Testament do not recognise a *suffering and dying* Messiah; and it is equally true that they nowhere regard Him as the medium through whom comes the *forgiveness of sin* and the *renewal of the heart*; and perfected, personal, loving fellowship with God is not represented as accomplished through Him. On the other hand, they distinctly announce not only, as before remarked, that *God* would make new and effectual arrangements for the atonement of sin (Zech. xiii. 1; Ezek. xxxvi. 25), and for the renovation of the heart by His Spirit; but that there should also be to Israel and all the world an unparalleled manifestation of grace in a delivering act of *God the Saviour*, by means of which there should be ushered in the salvation of the latter times. In doing so, the prophets everywhere speak of it as an approaching deliverance from the power of Assyria and Babylon; so that here also prophecy retains its peculiar symbolic character. But this deliverance from the oppression of the great powers of the world is at the same time deliverance of the people of God from *all* evil; there is associated with it the full forgiveness of sin, and the removal of Israel's blindness

and hardness of heart. Through it God makes a new purchase of His people for Himself ; it is the accomplishment of a second higher election, through which the promise, " They shall be my people, and I will be their God," is realized ; or, in other words, full communion of the people of God with Himself is then first attained. It is therefore frequently compared with the first historical proof of their election, the deliverance from Egypt, which, though it was the fundamental fact of the Old Testament religion, is frequently said to have been a symbol of their second exodus (Isa. x. 26, xi. 11-16 ; Mic. vii. 15 ; many places of the later Isaiah, and especially Jer. xvi. 14, 15, xxiii. 7, 8).

But prophetic acquaintance with the future salvation did not stop here. There was also announced a prophetic and priestly mediator through whom God's counsels concerning Israel and mankind generally should be accomplished. It is " the servant of God " described by the later Isaiah. He fulfils his prophetic calling, and bears witness to the truth of God and His salvation until it is carried to the ends of the earth ; he is prepared for his work by the Holy Ghost, and is of a meek and quiet spirit ; he comes not to destroy, but as a saviour to comfort and support ; with unwavering, enduring patience, and unwearying confidence, amidst shame and persecution, he is faithful unto death. He is sinless, and, as a priestly intercessor, he takes upon himself, with loving and willing resignation, the guilt of the people upon whom the divine displeasure has



fallen, and as their substitute bears the penalty ; he gives his life as an atonement for their unfaithfulness, and thus through his vicarious sufferings and intercessory prayers brings grace and salvation to all. From this path of suffering and death he at last emerges and enters into possession of imperishable glory, and as priestly mediator he is exalted to royal dignity. All have him to thank for their salvation, and he is everywhere acknowledged. Such deep glances into the counsels of God are given by prophecy ; but still the knowledge is only fragmentary, for the picture of this servant of God stands side by side and very closely united with that of the all-powerful Messianic King. In the mind of the prophet, it was not the image of a single person entrusted with saving mediatorial work ; this ideal servant of God was rather a personification of the Old Testament Church, and so in the visions of the seer this vicarious suffering coincides with the suffering which the Church of the Old Testament had endured in exile, and their deliverance from exile and return to their own land is for him the commencement of the exaltation of the servant of God, and the realization by Israel of the blessings which were to come through him (37). So that here also prophecy does not deny its symbolic character.

(d) *The Measure of Knowledge in relation to the Conditions and Historical Course of the Completion of Messianic Salvation.*

We shall finally, and as briefly as possible, group together the general features of prophetic knowledge concerning the *conditions* and *historical course* of Messianic salvation, so far as they have not yet come under consideration. The Messianic salvation, according to the tenor of Old Testament prophecy, was *first to be brought to Israel* as the chosen people of God, and through them it was to be received by the Gentiles. Even Israel itself cannot share in its blessings except on the condition of sincere *repentance and faith*, and a hearty *return* to God. Judgment, therefore, precedes the deliverance and perfection of the divine kingdom. All the prophets speak of Jehovah's day of judgment, and agree in the statement that it must begin with the people of God. The purpose of that judgment, as it respects Israel, is to bring the people to repentance and reformation. It is often described as intended to humble them, and to bring them to a recognition and penitential confession of their sins, to induce them to avoid the old paths of transgression, and to drive them in their necessity to God. Micah especially speaks thus (viii. 7-9); and in further exposition of his ideas, the later Isaiah describes how the people of God in the power of the heathen bore their lot as a well-deserved punishment; at the same time, however, holding fast to the belief that a faithful covenant God would raise them

from their fall, and against the ridicule and scorn of the heathen would gloriously vindicate their trust in the God of their salvation. In addition to this there was the conviction that the end of divine judgments, penitential shame for past unfaithfulness, and thorough reformation, would be realized in full measure through a glorious revelation of the sin-forgiving and *delivering grace of God*. So we find it in Hos. ii. 16–23, iii. 5, v. 15, vi. 1–3, xiv. 2–9, and especially in Ezek. xx. 33–44, xvi. 63, xxxvi. 31, 32, who had already experienced how little Israel's stiff-neckedness had been subdued by divine chastisements, and who therefore repeatedly declares that God, for the honour of His holy name, would carry out His gracious purpose of deliverance notwithstanding Israel's unworthiness. In the later Isaiah also God's merciful interposition is regarded in the same light, and everywhere the full knowledge of the living God and only Saviour is represented as the great end to be attained. In harmony with this, both prophets testify that impenitent obduracy against God's delivering grace and *rejection of the Messianic salvation brings after it the final destroying judgments* (Ezek. xx. 38; Isa. xlvi. 22, l. 11, lvii. 20, 21, lxv. 11–15, lxvi. 24). In many predictions reformation appears as the first *fruit of the outpouring of the Spirit*, as, for example, Zech. xii. 10–14. This remarkable prediction also defines the main subject of Israel's penitential sadness. Their guilt had culminated in the slaughter of a prophet, and their penitence is shown before all in the general mourning for him

whom they had pierced. The historical exposition cannot certainly find in him the Messiah, but has usually considered the murder accomplished at the time of the prediction; but still there lies in it, though not without the veil of type, a decided recognition of the fact that when Israel becomes a partaker of the Messianic salvation, she will have to mourn that she *pursued with mortal enmity a servant of God sent to bear witness of the truth*. This recognition we again find in the later Isaiah, so far at least as the sufferings of the "servant of God" are represented as originating in the enmity of fallen Israel; and in the fifty-third chapter the penitent Israelites confess that in his humiliation they misunderstood and despised him, that they regarded him as accursed of God, but had discovered that he was innocent, and was bearing the consequence of their own sins. And, finally, prophecy also declared that a *great prophet* would precede the coming of the Lord to judge among His people, and that *he should prepare the way before Him*, and call men to repentance (Mal. iii. 1, iv. 5, 6).

The entrance of the Gentiles into the kingdom of God follows Israel's conversion. And according to the general testimony of prophecy, they are prepared for it by *judicial* displays of Jehovah's sacred majesty in the destruction of the determined enemies of His kingdom. Those who are spared are filled with fear and trembling before Him, and have their eyes opened to see the vanity of idols and the sole divinity of Jehovah, whose judgments first overtake those powers into whose hands

Israel had been given. On the other hand, it is the *deliverance* of Israel accomplished by those judgments, and the *Messianic salvation* thus brought to her people, which first awake in the heathen the desire to belong to God, whom they have thus learned to know as the only Helper. In various predictions, such, for example, as Zech. ix. 9, Isa. xi. 10, the person and blessed government of the powerful *Messianic King* is described as the attractive force by which the nations are led to subject themselves to Him as God's representative upon earth, and to accept His decisions. In other passages it is narrated how *God Himself* makes known to them His will, and by His mediation sets up His peaceful kingdom among them (Isa. ii. 3, 4); how He takes away the veil of error and blindness (Isa. xxv. 7); and how their lips, polluted by the names of idols, shall be purified, so that they may call upon His name and serve Him with one consent (Zeph. iii. 9). But Old Testament prophecy announces with equal distinctness that the people of God are to be the instruments through whom the knowledge and worship of Jehovah will be carried to the Gentiles, and His gracious purposes concerning them accomplished. We find the beginning of this knowledge even in Jer. xii. 16, xxx. 10; and the later Isaiah describes copiously and repeatedly how the servant of God gives light to the Gentiles and discharges the prophetic mission, designed by Jehovah even in the election of Israel, with unwearied perseverance and faithfulness even unto death, until the sworn purpose of the Lord, that to Him every knee should bow and every tongue

should confess, is fulfilled, and His salvation carried to the ends of the earth. Prophecy, however, too clearly recognised the power of sin and estrangement from God, the intensity of the opposition between the heathen power and the kingdom of Jehovah, to predict a realization of the above results without conflict and further manifestations of divine power. It foretells, therefore, a final struggle of the heathen powers against the kingdom of God, which is to take place immediately before the advent of the latter-day glory, and to terminate in complete victory for the righteous, and the utter overthrow of the aggressors. We find this in Joel iii. 9-21, also in Mic. iv. 11-13, v. 4-8, and in the pre-exilian Zech. xii. 1-8, xiv. 3-21; Jeremiah also predicts that, after the judgments which fell upon the malevolent and idolatrous nations for the accomplishment of Israel's restoration, and subsequent to the offer of the knowledge of the true God and the opening of the door into His kingdom, there should be a second manifestation of divine displeasure against those who remained in rebellion (Jer. xii. 17). He teaches also that the heathen are threatened with these revelations of divine wrath only so far as they are found, notwithstanding judgment and mercy, refusing to enter the kingdom of God, and maintaining their enmity against Him. Most remarkable are the words of Ezek. xxviii. 25, 26. After the first judgments securing Israel against the surrounding nations, the divine kingdom is firmly established in the Holy Land, and for a long time the people enjoy undisturbed repose (xxxviii. 8, 11, 12). At

the end of the days the distant nations who have not learned the power of Jehovah gather themselves around Gog, the king of Magog, for a final attack. Then upon them and their countries descend the last judgments, by means of which God proves Himself before all to be the Holy One; all acknowledge Him, and His people remain for ever secure against their foes (Ezek. xxxviii. 39). The later Isaiah also speaks of a final attack by the heathen nations upon the city of God, and a last great judgment which is to descend upon them, subsequent to that which fell upon the Chaldean Empire, and after the people of God had begun to fulfil their prophetic calling (Isa. lxvi. 18-24).

The seed-like development of the community of the new covenant, and the contrast between the early lowliness of the struggling Church and its final triumphs, is placed in no clearer light by Old Testament prophecy than the twofold advent of the Messiah,—first in the form of a servant, and then in His glory. Indeed, it usually associates the establishment of the kingdom of God with His direct interposition. Still, the essential law which decides the course of the development of Christ's kingdom is clearly expressed by the later Isaiah. God's ways are not as men's ways, and His work is accomplished in a manner wholly different from theirs. The nation, called by Him to carry out His gracious purposes, accomplished nothing by external might, or show, or violence. Power originating from Him must justify itself; and His people must, in visible subjection to Him, over-

come the powers of the world. Only by patient, self-denying, voluntary submission to God and the mission of mercy imposed by Him, only by His invisible power and truth, do they gain the victory; only by treading the path of humility and suffering do they become partakers of the promised glory.

Finally, it may be mentioned that, as a conclusion to the general history of redemption, Old Testament prophecy announces, especially in the book of Daniel, the resurrection of the dead, and the renewal and glorification of the heavens and the earth.

In all this we recognise the elements of New Testament knowledge respecting the conditions of salvation and the course of the historic development of the kingdom of God, and especially do we discover the ground-lines of New Testament eschatology. But even here the fragmentary character and symbolic covering of prophetic knowledge makes itself remarkably prominent. At all points it is seen that the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament do not give any full revelation of the divine purposes to be accomplished in the New Testament dispensation, and that they are fully revealed only by the accomplishment itself.

##### *5. Messianic Prophecy as a Revelation of Christ, and a History of Salvation in relation to Him.*

The actual fulfilment of God's purposes of grace in and through Christ far surpasses the contents of Messianic prophecy. It is a more glorious revelation of the



eternal love of God, and offers greater blessings than prophecy had in view ; but it is not the less a fulfilment of that which prophets have spoken. The unreserved recognition of the fragmentary character of prophetic knowledge, in virtue of which the execution of God's gracious purposes appears committed to various instruments, in no way loosens the bond which associates Old Testament prophecy with New Testament fulfilment ; for those very Messianic predictions which, according to their historical sense, do not treat of the person of the Messiah, but of the visible appearance of Jehovah for judgment or for mercy, or of the church of the old covenant, or of the Messianic High Priest and the Messianic predictions,—generally have *a divinely intended and divinely ordered historical revealing connection with Christ*. The purpose of God, conceived before the foundation of the world, that Christ should take the central position of sole Mediator of all the blessings to be enjoyed in the kingdom of God and among mankind, includes in itself the issue that all prophecy, though emanating from various starting-points, tends toward Him, and as rays of light, converge in Him, and in Him and through Him finds its fulfilment (2 Cor. i. 20) (38). Even before the appearance of Christ there was, in some degree at least, a perception of this tendency of prophecy to reveal itself in history, and an understanding of its meaning which went beyond its historical sense. The difference between the contents of Messianic prophecy and New Testament fulfilment, to say

the least, was in some measure bridged over by the development of religious knowledge amongst the Jews in the times subsequent to the Old Testament canon. We cannot here, however, permit ourselves to enter upon a particular review of it. Besides the known preparation and building up of the New Testament doctrine of the Trinity, and especially of the Son, as taught in the Alexandrine Jewish doctrine of the Logos, the Palestinian doctrines of the *שְׁכִינָה* and the *גִּימְרָה*, and the conception of the hypostatic wisdom, it is needless, except for Christological purposes, to refer to the idea of a pre-existent Messiah already expressed in the book of Enoch (xlvi. 3, 6), and which approaches the remarkable representation given in the Targum of Jonathan, that the Messiah already exists, and will come forth from His concealment as soon as Israel shall repent (39). And with respect to the Christian hope, which looks upward into the open heavens, it may be connected with the doctrine of immortality held by the later Jews (Job iii. 6; Wisd. iii. 5), especially with the repeated statements in the Targum of Jonathan concerning eternal life and the second death of those consigned to Gehenna (40). But here we cannot forget that even the oldest Jewish expositors have applied many passages to the Messiah in which there is no historical reference to Him, and have associated with His appearing the fulfilment of all the promises of blessing (41). In the Targum of Jonathan, which, with the exceptions of the later additions, was at all events written before the destruc-

tion of Jerusalem, and which is based upon traditionary interpretation, reaching back to pre-Christian times, there are many predictions indicated as Messianic, and among them most of those to which the New Testament writers appeal. Especially is this the case with the prophecies of the later Isaiah respecting the servant of God. But the thought of a suffering and dying Messiah is diligently excluded, and all that is said in Isa. liii. is by interpretation set aside (42). This interpretation always rests, however, like the designation of the future aeon (עֲלֵמָא רִאֲתִי = הָעוֹלָם הַבֶּא) as the time of the Messiah, upon supposition (Jonath. 1 Kings iv. 33). The Messiah was chiefly considered as the medium of conveying the promised blessings, especially the forgiveness of sins, to the people of God (see Jonath. on Isa. liii. 4). We cannot therefore be surprised if, on such a ground, going beyond the historical sense of prophecy, Zacharias saw in the Messiah the fulfilment of the prediction of the coming of the Lord to His temple (Luke i. 76); and that Simeon, who refers (Luke ii. 29-32) to the servant of God, should find in the advent of Christ a similar accomplishment.

These, however, were only the preparatory elements of the knowledge, that all the promises of God should be yea and amen in the person of the one Messianic Mediator (2 Cor. i. 20). It first flowed with the greatest clearness from the Messianic self-consciousness of Jesus Christ. He so interpreted the Old Testament writings, that He, as a Son who was fully entrusted with the thoughts and intentions of the Father, brought

forth the eternal thoughts of God from their temporary and national surroundings, and in a similar manner He dealt with the words of prophecy. He understood and interpreted them in the consciousness that before the foundation of the world He was appointed to be the only Mediator of the new covenant, and that He had now come to carry out the whole counsel of God respecting mankind. In this consciousness he regarded all that prophecy had said concerning the mediatorship of salvation, and the bringing in of the perfection of the kingdom of God by various persons, as applying to Himself. By a distinct acknowledgment of the confession that He was the Christ (Matt. xvi. 16, 17) and the "Son of David," by announcing Himself as the "Son of man" and the "Son of God,"—though the contents of the latter are not to be limited to their Messianic sense,—by His sworn confession before the high priest (Matt. xxvi. 63, 65), and by His triumphant Messianic entry into Jerusalem according to the prophecy of Zech. ix. 9, He declared before all that the predictions concerning a coming Messiah were partly fulfilled, and were still being fulfilled in His person and work as the Chief in the kingdom of heaven. The image of the Messianic King springing from the depths of His self-consciousness was certainly different from that of the prophets; they differ in the same way as the idea of the external kingdom of God with its Old Testament colouring differs from that of the New Testament kingdom of heaven; but as the latter are internally connected with each other, so also

are the former. The Messianic King of the kingdom of God, through whom the divine government and its rectoral and saving activities are carried on, has in the conception of Christ only an invisible spiritual power; especially has it its foundations in the power of truth, for the witness and confirmation of which He came into the world. His glory, which is purely moral, is hidden, and is recognised only by the eye of faith; His kingdom, which is not of this world, is set up in the heart; His path to fame and general recognition leads through the deepest humiliation; and when at last all power is given to Him in heaven and upon earth, His royal government, by which He conducts the Church to perfection along the path He Himself has trod, is only manifest to those who see the invisible, until the "end of the days," when He will come again with a full revelation of His glory to judge His enemies, and to establish His kingdom in completeness and perfection. We may remark, that the difference between this picture and that drawn by the prophets consists chiefly in the organic union of the idea of the Messiah and the idea of the "servant of God," which had taken place in the consciousness of Christ, and which first presents the Messianic idea of the prophets in its full splendour when it announces the second coming of Christ in His glory.

In a similar manner Christ applies to Himself what is predicted of the "servant of God," or the Old Testament Church. His declaration concerning the passage in Isa. lxi. 1-3, when in the synagogue at

Nazareth, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke iv. 21), illustrates the fact. Of the words in Isa. liii. 12, "He was numbered with the transgressors," He expressly says they must be fulfilled in Him (Luke xxii. 37). Without doubt also, in the more common references to Old Testament prophecy respecting His sufferings and death, and the glory that should follow (Mark ix. 12; Matt. xxvi. 54; Luke xxiv. 25-27, 44-47), He had in view as well as the predictions of Ps. xxii. those also of Isa. liii. about the "servant of God." He was conscious of being the personal Mediator who should arise in Israel, through whom the Church of the Old Testament was to fulfil its prophetic and priestly calling, and in whom, therefore, all the divine purposes with regard to the vicarious sufferings of the "servant of God," and the results and rewards of the same, must have their fullest accomplishment. In Him who is the central figure of the Mosaic Church, its ordained head and mediatorial representative, the bearer of its prophetic and priestly calling on behalf of mankind, the predictions concerning the "servant of God" have their divinely-intended historical issue. Thus the ideal collective person becomes in the fulfilment a single individual, in whom, by a divinely-ordained necessity, must be accomplished all that was predicted of the other. Thus the apostles, with good reason, find all prophecies concerning the work (Matt. xii. 17-21) and vicarious sufferings and death (Acts viii. 32-35; 1 Pet. ii. 22, 23) of "the servant of God" realized in Christ.

We find also that Jesus considered the prediction concerning the visible appearance of Jehovah in the Messenger of the covenant for judgment and deliverance as fulfilled in His own person. This is undoubtedly implied in His express declaration that His own forerunner, John the Baptist, was Elias, who, according to prophecy, was to prepare the way for the coming of Jehovah (Matt. xi. 10-15, xvii. 10-13) (43). It is only carrying out Christ's own conception of prophecy, if, in the light of the fact that the highest expression of enmity to the truth of God which converted Israel would have to mourn over would be the crucifixion of the Messiah, the greatest of the prophets, the prediction of Zech. xii. 10-14, stripped of its Old Testament veil, is referred to Him, and we say also that He was not only the Messianic King, but the Messianic High Priest, which the prophecy of Zechariah has placed by His side. All New Testament appeals to the fulfilment in Christ of those passages which we can recognise as predictions only on account of their typical contents, are in a similar manner a further application of the principle of interpretation exemplified by Christ Himself. They rest also upon the assurance that, according to the eternal counsels of God, Christ is the fulfiller of all the divine purposes, and that therefore the prophetic contents of all those passages which express, under the veil of type, God's eternal purposes of mercy with regard to a definite historical or specific Old Testament relation, have their divinely-intended and ultimate reference to

Him,—a reference which, as expressly stated (John xx. 21, 22), often became clear even to the apostles themselves only by fulfilment, and which, putting aside the historical sense, they had exclusively in view (44). They had good reason, therefore, in their appeals to such passages, generally not to mention the human writers of the striking words, the form of quotation usually being, "It is written," "The Scripture saith," "The Holy Ghost witnesseth;" for the sense in which they quote such passages is not the historical sense, but that divinely-intended, historically-revealed reference to Christ.

We here briefly mention an inference which may be drawn from what has been said respecting the oneness and organic connection of the fragmentary knowledge of the Messianic predictions of the Old Testament, being first made manifest through their fulfilment in Christ. It may be said that the relation of prophecy to Jesus could only be very imperfectly realized by His contemporaries, and that their disappointment at His humble condition and ignominious death must have been, therefore, very excusable, if Old Testament prophecy really did not know a suffering and dying Messiah, and the prophetic portrait answered so little to the form of the Son of man. It may be replied, that at the time of Christ the knowledge, at least in its elements, already existed, that the predictions concerning "the servant of God" pointed to a Messianic Mediator of divine mercies. But especially is it to be remembered, that the knowledge and



recognition of Jesus as the Christ neither could nor should be founded upon the perception of an external agreement between prophecy and fulfilment; it should be associated rather with moral considerations. It was not the fragmentary character of Messianic prophecy, nor the one-sidedness of the Messianic portrait sketched by the prophets, but the failure of this moral preparation, especially the carnal resting in the earthly and merely outward, and the self-righteousness of the Jews, which led them and their rulers not to recognise in the Son of man the promised Messiah, and which made His humility and sufferings a stumbling-block and an offence. Where moral preparation existed, there prophecy, notwithstanding its partial character, fulfilled its purpose. Those who permitted themselves to be instructed by prophecy how the servant of God was humbly to advance through suffering and death to honour and glory, how the Church was to fulfil its calling and carry out the divine purposes, and in what way it was to realize its predicted triumph, were already prepared to see it dawn upon them, not with the royal splendour of the prophetic portrait of the Messiah, but in the obscurity and lowliness of the servant of God; and thus the humility and sufferings of Christ did not hinder those who, with a becoming spirit, waited for the kingdom from recognising in Him the predicted Saviour. The words of the prophets gave them the true light, and the offence which they might have taken at the cross was avoided. The character of Messianic prophecy generally is not such

that the knowledge of its fulfilment in Christ could originate in the perception of an external agreement by the mere fleshly eye. For, as we have seen, it is the nature of prophecy not to deal with individual concrete events of New Testament fulfilment, as the older supernaturalism supposes, but with the publication, and that mostly under the veil of type, of God's eternal purposes of mercy which were to be accomplished in the new covenant. The ideal contents are the bond by which the two are united ; and only those who were in a position to look beneath the superficial and the literal, and had a deeper insight into the meaning of the written word,—an insight to which, indeed, there was always an ethical element,—could see the reality and the method of the fulfilment of prophecy in and through Christ.

6. *The Union of Prophecy and Fulfilment in Individual Concrete Historical Features.*

It must here, however, be particularly observed, that with regard to the concrete historical accomplishment of the divine purposes, and with respect to many particulars of the same, there occurs here and there a striking coincidence between prediction and fulfilment. Not that, where this is the case, Messianic prediction was less psychological in its medium or less historically conditioned, while the Spirit in an exceptional manner presented before the eye of the prophet individual historical facts from New Testament history, for this

generally happened only with events which lay within the horizon of the historical present. Such special coincidences have a deeper ideal foundation, and especially in the fact that the same principle of divine government which operated at the time of the origin of the prophecy, and therefore became especially prominent in the consciousness of the prophet, moulding his utterances and giving them their individual colouring, 'would also limit the course and form of New Testament fulfilment. But a living faith in God will see in such coincidences of prophecy and fulfilment, peculiar as they often are, and extending to individual external features, a part of the plan according to which He has associated the revelation and the history of salvation with each other in mutual connection. These instances should be finger-posts directing to the deeper and more essential connection between prophecy and fulfilment, external halting-places which come to the help of the yet weak understanding, and which should awaken attention to the fulfilment of prophecy, and stimulate to more searching inquiry respecting the link which unites the two. Manifestly Christ had this purpose in view when He arranged His entry into Jerusalem in such a manner as to correspond with the verbal description of Zech. ix. 9. Besides this, we may refer, for example, to the prediction that the Messiah would go forth from Bethlehem; by which it would be conveyed to the prophet that the kingdom of the house of David, after it had sunk to the lowest condition through the judgments of God, would, by the

Messianic King, as another David, be raised to the highest glory, and thus a second time a deliverer should go forth from the little insignificant Bethlehem ; a prediction which, through the birth of Christ there, if the record is admitted to be historical, secures fulfilment not only according to its ideal contents, but according to its literal reading also. Wholly unassailable by historical criticism is the remarkable agreement of New Testament fulfilment with the prophecy recorded in Isa. ix. 1, according to which the inhabitants of the land of Zebulon and Naphthali, in the neighbourhood of Gennesareth and the Jordan, should be the first to see the light of the Messianic salvation (Matt. iv. 13-16) (45). A similarly striking coincidence is to be found in other particulars between New Testament fulfilment and many Old Testament declarations, which can be regarded as referring to Christ only by virtue of their typical signification (46). A noteworthy example of this we find in the twenty-second Psalm, from which the picture of the crucified Christ, surrounded by His triumphant enemies, starts forth in unmistakeable lines before every Christian eye (Matt. xxvii. 46 ; John xix. 24 ; Matt. xxvii. 43). The agreement of the portrait drawn by Isaiah of the servant of God with that of Christ presents many special features (xlii. 2, 3, l. 5, 6, liii. 1-12). The New Testament writers also express the actual relation of prophecy and fulfilment, when in many places of the evangelic history they find the accomplishment of Old Testament predictions, although in the fulness of

the conviction that all the Old Testament speaks of Christ, they found coincidences between the two oftener than would be warranted by an accurate historical exposition. Of a different character is that agreement of the concrete historical fulfilment of God's purposes of mercy with the contents of prophecy, which is a necessary consequence of the historical organic connection existing between the old and the new covenant. In this class we place the Israelitish and Davidic origin of Christ, the prediction that the Holy Land should be the sphere of His activity, and the holy city the chief theatre for the accomplishment of those acts which bring salvation, and that an election out of Israel should form the groundwork of the Christian Church.

*7. The Fulfilment of Messianic Prophecy in the Church and Kingdom of Christ.*

Through Christ also are fulfilled the Messianic predictions of the Old Testament respecting *His Church and kingdom*; and that, not only with regard to the blessings to be enjoyed by the people of God, and the final establishment of His government, but also with regard to the calling and destiny of His followers, and their preparation to fulfil it. For example, the prediction concerning "the servant of God" has by no means found its complete fulfilment in the labours, sufferings, and death of Christ. If, in its historical sense, it has to do, not with the vicarious work of a single individual,

but with the Church of the Old Testament, its prophetic aim cannot be confined exclusively to Christ, but must be extended also to His Church, and the eternal purpose of God must be accomplished in the latter as well as in the former. The Church realizes its destination and calling when Christ uses human instruments to fulfil divine purposes, and to carry the salvation of God to the ends of the earth, as when Paul and Barnabas, according to Acts xiii. 46, 47, find in Isa. xlix. 6 an authoritative commission to publish the gospel to the heathen—an interpretation of prophecy in the light of the New Testament equally as justifiable as the Messianic. It is here shown how the Church has to do the work of the Lord, not by dependence on external power, not by noisy, violent, sensational activity, but by the power coming down from God keeping itself in external subjection against the might of the world, by persevering patience and self-denial, by sacrificing surrender to the Lord, and loving, truthful service in the calling received from Him. Here also is described in type the course of the Church through suffering and conflict to glory and honour; and she finds that what is said of the vicarious and mediatorial signification of the sufferings of the servant of God, although in its full sense it is realized in Christ alone, is also applicable in a certain measure to that which is endured by Christian men for the sake of righteousness and the gospel (Col. i. 24; Eph. iii. 13).

As Messianic prophecy pointed to the end of the

way of God, and to the establishment of His kingdom on earth; so the New Testament Church has still to expect its full accomplishment through Christ. Christ Himself as the Messianic King shall first be revealed in His glory; His Church must first become what prophecy says it shall be, and His kingdom must extend over the whole earth, and enclose all nations in its embrace. The entire historical development of the Church of Christ up to the period of its glory is a continuous, gradual fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy, the accomplishment of that which from the beginning has usually been prominently associated with Jehovah's Messianic work of deliverance; the establishment of the kingdom of God upon the earth in its full grandeur and glory is recognised in New Testament history as its final issue. In this connection we may say that the historic fulfilment has taken an essentially different course from that followed by the development of Messianic prophecy. While the latter has generally advanced from the outward splendour of the perfected kingdom of God to a deeper knowledge of its inner nature and the prerequisites for its establishment, the former finds the kingdom of God first set up in the heart, then comes its inner growth, and only at last appears the hidden glory of the Church of God in external visible manifestation (47). The prophecies of the last struggle of the world-power against the kingdom of God, and of His final judgments upon His foes, are also taken up again at the closing stage of historic development by New

Testament prophecy. And then come in due course such eschatological announcements as those of the resurrection of the dead, and of the new heavens and new earth, etc. Thus the Christian Church has still to await the complete fulfilment of the prophecies of the Old Testament ; but we must, as before remarked, guard against expecting the accomplishment of every feature of prophecy which still remains unfulfilled, or the realization of these prophecies not resumed in New Testament prediction. In like manner, we should avoid the error of seeking in the prophetic word of God definite information respecting every particular of the Church's history. Such information is given neither by the Old Testament nor the New. The course of the development of the kingdom of God, so far as it extends beyond the period to which prophecy belongs, is brought into the light by prophecy only to the extent that its essential principles and general tendency relieve the darkness. If we would preserve ourselves from error, and have a sure word of prophecy to which we may take heed as unto a light shining in a dark place (2 Pet. i. 19), we must use it rightly, that is, we must use it as the prophets themselves used the predictions of their predecessors. We have seen how they did this ; not by seeking therein minute information with regard to the events of their own times, or of the approaching future, but the general ideas, the essential principles, of the divine government ; they took the great outlines of the kingdom of God, applied them to existing



circumstances, and thus entered into the possession of light. When we imitate this example, the prophetic word of God performs for us the service it was intended to do; we have then “a sure rule of judgment” concerning the circumstances, struggles, and commotions of our own times, and are not in danger of being carried away by the current, and given up to false hopes or groundless fears. We then learn more and more to consider the events of our own history, in the higher light in which they appear, only as a part of the way which leads to the accomplishment of Jehovah’s designs. What particular periods in the development of God’s kingdom are still to come—which so many expositors of the Apocalypse profess to know—we cannot, and need not know. It is enough if we, in a state of watchfulness and preparation, have our eye fixed with joyful hope upon the end of God’s purpose, and recognise our own history as a part of the road to it. More, the prophets themselves did not know concerning the times in which they lived.

## CONCLUSION.



REVIEW of the course followed in this treatise convinces us that nothing is lost by carrying out a severe historical exposition of Old Testament prophecy; and especially does the belief that salvation through Christ was for centuries announced in the prophetic word of God, and that all His promises are Yea and Amen in Him, remain unshaken. We cannot, however, ascribe to the prophets so great a measure of knowledge of the divine purposes, nor refer so many particular, definite predictions to Christ, as they are accustomed to do who look at prophecy from a one-sided, supernaturalistic standpoint, or who at least remain under the influence of such considerations. But the divinely-ordained historical direction towards Christ of the entire body of prophecy has been confirmed to us. It may be asked, whether our somewhat circuitous and distant journey in search of an accurate settlement of the historical sense of prophecy brings to us a positive, and more than purely theoretic, gain? Do not they arrive at the same conclusion by a much shorter route, who say, with Hengstenberg and Keil(1),

that the question respecting the result of the inquiries of the Old Testament prophets themselves into the meaning of the predictions given them by the Spirit of Christ is of little importance, and that we have only to ascertain, in the light of New Testament fulfilment, what the Spirit of Christ says to us? Can we not, they say, follow the example of Christ and His apostles, who, instead of inquiring for the historical sense of the written word, looked only for its meaning according to the light shed upon it by the New Testament? We reply, first, that our relation to the Old Testament is somewhat different from that of Christ and His apostles, inasmuch as we are not, like them, familiar with the Old Testament economy by immediate observation and experience; and we should be guilty of blind self-confidence if we were to give ourselves credit for the same profound penetration which enabled our Lord Himself clearly and certainly to comprehend and teach the eternal thoughts of God as contained in the Old Testament writings. Certainly, for the practical use of the Old Testament, what the word of prophecy says to us is most important, and we have therefore to explain it in the light of the New; but we cannot do this clearly and certainly if we have not already ascertained its historical sense. Otherwise, our exposition will lead to error. The history of Old Testament exegesis in the Christian Church shows clearly enough how, in consequence of the neglect of the historical sense, the genuine typological exposition has long degenerated into uncertain and arbitrary, allegorical and dogmatiz-

ing interpretation which puts in everywhere, in the most unlikely places, references to Christ and New Testament knowledge; and therefore frequently overlooks the divine idea really contained in many passages, and thus casts away the power contained therein(2). A sufficient security against the danger of falling into this error is to be found only in a clear perception of the historical character of prophecy, and the relation of the historical sense to New Testament fulfilment. And not less will this perception preserve those who have it from that Judaizing overestimate of specific Old Testament forms of thought, which practically is in no way unimportant, and which in a mission amongst Israelites can only yield the usual fruit, and—as the sects of our time show—lead to the most singular errors.

We may venture confidently to affirm, that our recognition of the historical sense of Messianic prophecy brings the gain, that in the preparatory revelation it contains concerning Christ and His kingdom,—both in its historical reality, and in its true and wonderful nature,—the glory of the educating wisdom of God is more fully known. Those who, unconcerned about the historical sense, put into prophecy the knowledge which comes with New Testament fulfilment, fail to realize its full living contents; nor are they accompanied by the feeling that they have a firm historical foundation under their feet; indeed, they have beforehand renounced a clear historically-founded knowledge of the wonderful process by which God, in His wisdom, pre-

pared Israel for the new covenant. On the other hand, the more we learn to understand individual predictions in their organic-genetic connection with the religious life of the people of the Old Testament, and in their relation to the concrete historical circumstances of their origin, the more shall we be impressed with the fresh, vigorous life of the historic reality; and if we see how these various predictions, uttered from different standpoints, each make known in a fragmentary manner only a single phase of the counsels of God, and all more or less remaining within the limits of the Old Testament find their unity and fulfilment in Christ, then have we the method of the Spirit of revelation, and the preparatory educational work of Jehovah is before our eyes in tangible historical reality, and we arrive at "the joy of the green germ-thought, and the original fulness of the ideas of the holy writings in their beautiful spring attire" (3), and a deeper vision into the adorable glory of this educational work. For it is not he who has the profoundest impression of the glory of God, as revealed in nature, who gazes for the first time upon a landscape when it is fully arrayed in its green attire, but he who has watched the gradual development of germ and bud and flower; and in like manner, it is not the man who thinks he finds everywhere in the sacred writings the truths of salvation in their complete New Testament form, but who has an open eye for their gradual growth in the minds of the devout men of the Old Testament.

# NOTES.

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## NOTES TO INTRODUCTION.

(1) In relation to the Christology of John, see my remarks in *Studien und Kritiken*, 1864, pp. 552, etc.

(2) "We must carefully distinguish between two questions: the question, in what sense the prophets understood their predictions, and in what sense God intended them. The reply to the first cannot be found in this way, *nor is it to us of great importance*."—Hengstenberg's *Christologie*, iii. 2, p. 204. The little value which Hengstenberg attaches to the historical meaning of prophecy results from his views of prophecy itself. If the prophet had only to describe the image shown to him while in a state of ecstasy, and if his prophecy consisted in this image, the production of which, though the mental activity of the prophet was not unconcerned, was essentially only the work of the Spirit of God, it matters but little to what extent the prophet himself perceived its meaning, or what sense he attached to his words.

(3) It is a gratifying proof of a growing reconciliation of opposing systems of Old Testament interpretation, that the views expressed above are substantially recognised by one who comes from the school of Hengstenberg. See Dr. Küper's work, *Das Prophetenthum des Alten Bundes*, Leipzig 1870, p. 89. Though, indeed, he distinguishes between the contents of prophecy and its revealing and redemptive purpose, or rather between its historical sense, as elicited by exegesis, and its con-

tents, and ascribes to the latter its redemptive aim; it would be more serviceable to his purpose as much as possible to distinguish prophecy as something given objectively by the Spirit of God, from the subjective mental life of the prophet, than it would be to separate from that mental life a clear knowledge of the actual subject-matter.

With the contents of the expression we can associate a clear and distinct idea only when we make them parallel with the historical sense. Küper is certainly right when he says that the prophets are conscious of publishing mysteries which they did not understand (though his proof-texts, Jer. xxxiii. 3, Dan. ix. 22, Zech. iv., Hab. ii. 1-3, only show that they had not understood *before* what was then revealed to them). As many profound poetic sayings express higher truths than those of which the poet was conscious, so the sayings of the prophet often enclose treasures the value of which he himself only indistinctly perceived, and which come fully into his consciousness only with the lapse of time. Especially will this be the case with visions, where reflection upon what is clearly conceived and retained brings into view the inner connection and significance of various individual features. To the contents of prophecy certainly belong, not only the sense to which the prophet gives a full, conscious expression, but also the deeper truth which, for him, is still in the twilight of presentiment. But it belongs to it only in the entire uncertainty of that presentiment in which it is present to his own mind and the minds of his contemporaries, and can be comprehended, more or less, according to the measure of their susceptibility. And so far it belongs to the historical sense. But the actual object of revelation and prophecy, the purpose of Jehovah, is still far beyond the conception of the prophet, and therefore it comes to pass that later revelations do not correspond in external form with those which have gone before, though organically developed from them. (See below.) But what for the individual

prophet lies beyond the sphere of his perception cannot belong to the contents of his prediction; and so between the historical sense and the contents of any given prophecy there cannot be any distinction.

## NOTES TO FIRST SECTION.

(1) See Oehler's article on "Prophecy" in Herzog's *Real-Encyclopädie*, vol. xvii. p. 627. Very instructive also is Jer. xxviii. In ver. 6, Jeremiah very clearly distinguishes the false prophecy of Hananiah, though it harmonized with the patriotic desires of his own heart, from the burden of the Lord which he was commissioned to proclaim. So certainly did he know that Hananiah was a false prophet, that he was content to leave the decision to history; indeed, when Hananiah more forcibly reaffirmed the false prediction, he made no reply, but simply "went his way;" and only when the word of the Lord came to him again did he oppose, in a more impressive manner, his own prediction of calamity to Hananiah's promises of blessing, at the same time directly charging him with being a false prophet, and foretelling his well-deserved punishment during that very year. Comp. Deut. xviii. 20-23. Not less interesting is 2 Sam. vii., according to which Nathan first pronounced David's purpose to build a temple as pleasing to God; but afterwards, by a divine message which came to him in a vision, he forbids him to carry out his intention. See H. Schulz, *Alttestamentliche Theologie*, vol. i. p. 167, vol. ii. p. 44.

(2) See Bertheau, "Die alttestamentliche Weissagung von Israels Reichsherrlichkeit in seinem Lande," II., in *den Jahrbuch für Deutsche Theologie*, 1859, vol. iv. p. 603. Also Oehler, art. "Weissagung," as before, p. 629. Also Tholuck, *Die Propheten und ihre Weissagungen*, p. 49.



(3) See Hengstenberg, *Christologie*, iii. 2, pp. 158–217.

(4) Compare, as before, pp. 169, 173, 174, 176, 179, 181, 184.

(5) Bertheau, as before, pp. 607 and 610.

(6) Hengstenberg's view, that the psychological condition of the prophets at the moment of divine communication were carried beyond the sphere of ordinary psychological experience, is manifestly governed by the desire to make out the strongest possible case for the reality of divine revelation. But should wonders and signs be demanded to warrant to the believer his faith in God? And will this view of the case really answer the end? Visions may well be founded on such a sickly position! Besides, Hengstenberg's doctrine is not free from contradiction. In the first edition of his *Christology* he fully expounded his fundamental principles, and was led into the expression of Montanistic error. The changes in his second edition are improvements, so far as they are in harmony with the actual position; but, at the same time, when compared with the fundamental view, still retained, and its necessary consequences, they are still partially contradictory. For example, the proposition, that "the prophets, as a rule, have to do with universal truths, and not with facts, in their empiric individuality," agrees but little with the doctrine, elsewhere taught, that the historical and specific features of Messianic prophecy are to be resolved into mere images. Küper's exposition is wanting in clearness. He also reduces all prophecy to an "ecstatic basis;" but we are to take this expression in "a wider sense." But to the question, in what sense? we get only the negative reply, that extraordinary corporeal appearances and bodily excitement are not, as a rule, associated with prophetic conditions. On the other hand, he says that with such prophets as Isaiah and Jeremiah, in addition to the "extraordinary conditions of

the seizure," there are calmer states, "in which prophecy bears more the usual character of the higher grade of Israel's spiritual life;" also, "that in this case their prophetic activity was not merely an inner certainty of a divine mission, but also a spiritual elevation which rested upon special experiences of divine power and operations of the Spirit," and that "special illumination entered as often as it was needed for the discharge of their calling," which is, at least by us, expressly acknowledged. But it is an entirely different question whether these "special experiences" and "special illuminations" are of a kind which compel us to regard all prophecy as indicating "ecstatic conditions" and an "ecstatic basis." It seems that Küper thought himself unable to dispense with these expressions, because "prophecy holds the objectivity of its contents in opposition to the active and subjective functions of consciousness," without having itself any clear account of what it really contains.

(7) It is, however, admitted that to speak with tongues did not always imply a condition of unconsciousness. The case mentioned by the apostle shows that he who spoke with tongues could explain what he said (1 Cor. xiv.). Between the lowest and the higher states of ecstasy there are many degrees.

(8) See paragraph from Beck's *Biblical Psychology*, quoted by Tholuck, p. 69, as before.

(9) Compare, for example, Cicero, *de divinatione*, i. 50 (113), 51 (117), 57 (129), 30 (63).

(10) See Hupfeld, *Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, iii. p. 397, and iv. p. 139.

(11) We prefer this expression to that in current use, for instance, by Oehler, art. "Weissagung," p. 636, *Theologie des Alten Testaments*, ii. p. 187, who design-

nates the psychological aspect of prophecy as "the inner intuition," because an idea the opposite of that intended easily associates itself with the latter. If by "intuition" it is meant only that "the subject recognises the communication as directly given, and not self-produced," there can be no objection to its use.

(12) The reading in this passage cannot be correct. That לְבִי should read לְבֹי we regard as proved. Hupfeld, *in loco*.

(13) The recognition of this difference is the foundation of the well-known Rabbinical doctrine, that the prophetic writings are given by the רוּחַ הַקְּבִיּוֹת, the Hagiographa only in a general way by the רוּחַ הַקֹּדֶשׁ

(14) That we may not be carried away from our subject, we decline to discuss the bearing of what is said above respecting prophetic utterances upon our preachers, or to raise the question as to what they have in common, or wherein they differ, when their ministry is of the right kind.

(15) Oehler, as before, p. 639.

(16) Hitzig, *Die Psalmen*, p. 128.

(17) For further remarks upon this natural foundation of the χάρισμα προφητείας, see, amongst others, Tholuck, as before, p. 1, and the authors there quoted.

(18) See Oehler, as before, p. 639.

(19) In the above remarks we have expressly considered only that kind of divine communication which we have recognised as being most common. It would be easy to show that our exposition avails in all essentials for revelation either by means of ecstasy or

visions, as may be seen from what has before been pointed out respecting the psychological origin of the latter.

(20) Those who see in this idea only the evidence of a narrow national exclusiveness, can have given it but little consideration. So little did it rest upon such a foundation, that the devout Israelite had the most lively consciousness that the nation, without any merit of its own, had been chosen by the free grace of God; and with equal readiness did he acknowledge the fact that the divine displeasure fell as heavily upon apostate Israel as it did upon the heathen nations that ventured to attack her.

(21) See my *Lehrbegriff des Hebräerbriefes*, p. 818, and the passages quoted there, to which may be added Ezek. xx. 11.

(22) It deserves notice, that this Pentateuchian expression of the idea of the covenant first comes into use in the prophetic writings with Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Zechariah, who use it with great frequency. Jer. vii. 23, xi. 4, xxiv. 7, xxx. 22, xxxi. 1, xxxii. 38; Ezek. xi. 20, xiv. 11, xxxiv. 24, xxxvi. 28, xxxvii. 23, 27; Zech. ii. 15, viii. 8.

(23) The only place which expresses the thought that Jehovah should be honoured as the God of Israel is Deut. xxvi. 17, for we do well to follow with Tuch the common usage of the language in Gen. xxviii. 21, and take *וַיְהִי יְהוָה לִי לְאֱלֹהִים* as antecedent, which will then read, "and if Jehovah (helping and protecting) shows Himself as God to me," etc.

(24) We may observe that Old Testament prophecy draws a parallel between the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt and introduction to the Promised Land, and

the Messianic mercies of God, and regards the latter as the second higher and more perfect realization of the choice of the covenant people. See, for example, Isa. x. 26, xi. 1, 16, xii. ; Mic. vii. 15 ; Jer. xxiii. 6-8, xxxi. ; Isa. lxxv. 9, and other passages.

(25) Still, the idea that Israel, as a priestly nation, has a mediatorial office in relation to God and mankind, is not to be found in the words מְמַלְכָּה בְּהִנֵּי in Ex. xix. 6.

(25a) Hupfeld, *Comment. de primitiva et vera festorum apud Hebræos ratione*, etc., i. p. 22 sqq. (See text, p. 44, line 2.)

(26) These gracious words, by which God characterizes Himself, resound through the entire Old Testament Scriptures. Comp. Ex. xxxiv. 6 with xxxiii. 19 ; also Joel ii. 13 ; Nah. i. 3 ; Jonah iv. 2 ; Ps. lxxxvi. 15, ciii. 8, cxi. 4, cxlv. 8 ; 2 Chron. xxx. 9 ; Neh. ix. 17, 31.

(27) See Diestel, "Die Idee der Gerechtigkeit im Alten Testament," in *den Jahrbüchern für Deutsche Theologie*, v. 1860, p. 176 sq.

(28) This original tendency of the Old Testament religion to universality is in harmony with its revealed character, and distinguishes it from all other ancient systems. The latter are certainly much more exclusive than that of the Israelites. It is true they allow other religions to exist peaceably alongside of them, and even appropriate their principles ; but they are thus tolerant simply because they originally rest upon a purely natural basis. No claim can be made upon other nations to acknowledge their idols as the sole objects of worship. Buddhism alone has anything of this tendency in common with the old Testament religion.

(29) To this representation those persons may be referred who are uneasy lest linguistic and historical researches on the one hand, and physiological inquiries on the other, should result in the discovery that the human race has not spread over the earth from one centre. The essential thing, however, remains undisturbed. Moreover, this full and clear consciousness of the unity and close relation of mankind is another peculiarity of the Old Testament religion by which it was distinguished from all others.

(30) Incorrectly, Knobel remarks on this passage: "He listens to the intercession, but swears that the earth shall be filled with His glory." That which God swears is introduced by *וְ* in ver. 22. Bunsen also improperly translates, "and all the earth is full of the glory of the Eternal;" a rendering which the Imperfect *יִמְלֵךְ* will not permit. Comp. Ps. lxxii. 19 with Isa. vi. 3; Ps. xxxiii. 5, cxix. 64.

(31) Comp. Hengstenberg's *Christologie*, 2d ed. i. p. 52. That the promise has a different sense where *Niphal* is used instead of *Hithpael*, and may be understood of the coming of blessing upon all nations through or in Abraham, as Hengstenberg, Keil (*Bibl. Commentar über die Bücher Moses*, p. 133), and others suppose, might be admitted, for the original peculiar reflexive meaning of *Niphal* cannot be taken away from it,—if Gustave Baur (*Geschichte der alttestamentliche Weissagung*, i. p. 205) were right in his supposition that Gen. xxii. 18 and xxvi. 4 have been written by different authors,—an idea which we hold to be unfounded. But even then, if we have regard to the context, especially in Gen. xii., this meaning of *Niphal* is improbable. Apart, however, from this, to interpret Zech. viii. 13, "Ye shall be a blessing," (Gen. xii. 2), confirms our view; for we can hardly accept it as probable, that after the promise had been made to the *patriarchs themselves* of the blessings of a numerous

posterity, victory over all their enemies, and the possession of Canaan, the *nations of the earth* should have promised to them *spiritual blessings* through the knowledge of the true God imparted by Israel (Baur, p. 215). Delitzsch, on Gen. xii. 3, has given the correct interpretation.

See the beginning of the fulfilment of this prediction, Gen. xxvi. 28, 29.

(32) Comp. Diestel, "Die Idee des theokratischen Königs," in the *Jahrb. für Deutsche Theologie*, viii. p. 536; and Oehler's art. "Könige, Königthum in Israel," in Herzog's *Real-Encyclopädie*.

(33) Though it is here a matter of indifference, the consideration that in these Psalms there is no indication that the writers had in their thoughts a person belonging to the future, decides against their Messianic significance, and in favour of their reference to a definite historical king. Nor does any single expression occur which goes beyond what, according to the testimony of other passages, is sometimes said in poetic language of a contemporary king.

(34) The translation of בְּסֵאֵךְ אֱלֹהִים by "thy God's throne," or "thy throne of God," seems to us the simplest, and its correctness cannot be doubted. Comp. Hupfeld, *in loco*. Nor can it be shown why עוֹלָם וָעֶד should not be the predicate as well as לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד (Lam. v. 19) and לְעוֹלָם. Comp. Ewald and Hitzig. Besides, a substantive in the predicate may take the place of an adjective. Comp. Ewald, § 296*b*. Moreover, nothing would be changed if, with Ewald, Hitzig, and others, we translate, "Thy throne is (a throne) of God for ever and ever."

(35) Ewald's exposition, according to which we should think of a seat at the right hand of Jehovah in a

triumphal car in which God and the king go forth to battle (Ps. xliv. 9 ; 2 Sam. v. 24), and with which Diestel (p. 563) agrees, is certainly incorrect. It is distinctly shown by ver. 3 that the reference is to what the ruler of the kingdom of God is, as such, and not to special help from God in battle. How little, if we misapprehend the nature of the poetic diction, we can explain the picture in harmony with the following verses—according to which evidently the king goes forth to battle—appears even from the fourth verse, where, instead of the king being at the right hand of Jehovah, Jehovah is said to be at the right hand of the king. For עַד, comp. Gen. xxviii. 15.

(36) Diestel (p. 559) justly points out the historical explanation of this idea in 1 Kings xv. 4, 5 ; 2 Kings viii. 18, 19. It is, in the main, one of those ideas which characterize the historic portions of the books. Comp. also 1 Kings xi. 12, 13, xxxii. 36, 39 ; 2 Kings xix. 34, xx. 6, and the latter part of the book.

(37) From what has been said above respecting the relation of the royal dignity to that peculiar to the whole nation, it is clear how the "great unknown" in Isa. lv. 3-5 could appropriate the הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל to the whole people of God in a similar manner as he did the priestly office. According to his representation, there will be in the latter days neither a special priesthood nor distinct royal dignities. The choice of Israel gradually shows itself to be to those privileges which had been peculiar to kings and priests.

(38) Diestel, as before (p. 570), has called attention to the fact that, in order rightly to appreciate the representations which the Israelites associated with the idea of universal dominion, there must be taken into consideration, first, their limited geographical circle, and then the very loose relation of dependence in which in



Eastern Asia the subjection of foreign nations consisted. It may be added, that the thoroughly ideal character of the drapery in which imagination clothed their ideas must not be forgotten. The image which the Israelite sketched, on the basis of his limited geographical knowledge and the political events of his times, of the universal authority of the king who ruled the city of God, had at all events that very undecided outline which such an ideal representation necessarily brings with it. Very similar to the theocratic kingdom of the Israelites was the Germano-Roman empire—in its best days at least. Universal empire was an essential part of its idea.

(39) Hence the typical Messianic Psalms.

(40) Comp. Diestel, as before, pp. 548, 578, 587.

## NOTES TO SECOND SECTION.

(1) See Bertheau, "Die alttestamentliche Weissagung von Israels Reichsherrlichkeit in seinem Lande," 2d and 3d part, in *den Jahrbüchern für Deutsche Theologie*, vol. iv. p. 595, and vol. v. p. 486.

(2) See, for example, Delitzsch in his closing remarks on the third part of Drechsler's *Commentar zu Jesaias*, p. 391: "But such a naturalization in the distinct future continuously and persistently maintained through twenty-seven discourses, as may be seen in chapters xl.-lxvi., is certainly singular and unparalleled." Comp. also p. 389.

(3) See Oehler, art. "Weissagung," in Herzog's *Real-Encyclopädie*, xvii. p. 652.

(4) A comparison of the last-quoted passages is in-

structive, as showing that the prophets, in order to make their threatenings and promises forcible and impressive, frequently painted in detail the features of approaching judgment or mercy without attaching particular importance to the details themselves, or wishing to make the truth of the prediction dependent upon their harmony ; they did not hesitate, therefore, in the reproduction of a prophecy, to change any individual feature of the picture. In Isa. vii. 18-25 the prophet speaks of the devastation of the land of Judea as caused by the meeting of the armies of Assyria and Egypt, doubtless implying that the forces of the latter power would march to Judea in order to stop the advance of the former ; but in the reproduction of the prophecy about a year and a half later (viii. 5) he mentions Assyria only as the instrument of the divine displeasure.

(5) The two passages (Isa. xxx. 33, and xxxi. 8, 9) are a further proof of the remarks in the last note. In the first passage the prophet affirms that Sennacherib will perish with his army, but in the repetition of the prediction he says that with fear he will return to his own land. See also xxxvii. 34.

(6) Bertheau, *Jahrb. für Deutsche Theologie*, iv. p. 352, without foundation, refers what is said in Deut. xviii. 22 of predictions having reference to the near future, to predictions of blessing. It is true that false prophets were mostly concerned with predictions of prosperity and peace ; still this limitation is arbitrarily introduced into the text, and such places as 1 Kings xxii. 28, Mic. iii. 5, and Ezek. xiii. 22, show that the test must be applicable also to prophecies of evil.

(7) It is easy to show that the prophecy of Mic. iv. 10, which has usually been regarded as a decided evidence of the contrary (Hengstenberg, *Christologie*, 2d ed. i. p. 541), is not available for such a purpose ; and the fact has been recognized in Caspari's valuable paper,

“Ueber Micha den Morasthiten” (Christiania 1851, p. 172). Micah certainly does not speak of the captivity of the Jews by the Chaldeans, which took place about 150 years after, but of their deportation to Babylon by the Assyrians. He has nowhere anything to say of the former, but everywhere regards the latter as the instrument of the divine judgments. Even in Messianic times Assyria is represented as an aggressive power (Mic. v. 5). The first part of the tenth verse of the fourth chapter evidently synchronizes with the twelfth verse of the third. But it is expressly recorded in Jer. xxvi. 18, 19, that this prophecy was not fulfilled. Jehovah, on account of the repentance of Hezekiah, repented Him of the evil which He had threatened. Nor are we justified in accepting as a fulfilment of this prediction the deportation of the Jews by the Chaldeans; our thoughts are much rather directed to averted calamity in the time of Hezekiah, of which Assyria alone could have been the instrument. What Hengstenberg advances against this (p. 540) is simply absurd. It was quite a possible thing for Micah to threaten an exile to Babylon by the Assyrians, for Babylon belonged at that time—the earlier part of Hezekiah’s reign—to Assyria. Tiglath Pileser, in the first year of his reign (745), had brought into subjection and assumed the title “King of Sumir and Akkad,” that is, of Babylon; and later on, in 731, by a second campaign the Assyrian power was firmly established. (See Schrader, *Die Keilinschriften und das Alte Testament*, p. 128.) But the Babylonians continually endeavoured to regain their independence. The king of Southern Babylon, especially Merodach Baladan I., made an energetic effort to cast off the Assyrian yoke. Sargon, therefore, undertook a campaign into Babylonia, and having conquered Merodach Baladan, carried the inhabitants captive into Syria (Schrader, 162–264; comp. 2 Kings xvii. 24). If Micah’s prophecy belongs to a period subsequent to this event, so also the announcement of a deportation to Babylon must be very near to it. But even if it should

belong to an earlier period, the well-known Assyrian policy, of securing its conquests by removing the people, would naturally direct the thoughts of the prophet to Babylon. At a later period, Isaiah, Micah's contemporary, threatens Shebna with banishment to Mesopotamia or Babylon by the Assyrians; for to one of these two countries the description "a land of wide spaces" must refer (Isa. xxii. 18), and Sennacherib in Isa. xxxvi. 17 has in view deportation to one of these districts; and certainly a design in harmony with historical relations and a typical representation in prophecy is not unsuitable to Micah. He loves to place the history of the future in parallel with that of the past (iv. 8, v. 2). Assyria is in his eyes the land of Nimrod (v. 6), and the first centre of his power was at Babel (Gen. x. 10). In the first seat of empire the calamities of the people of God shall be greatest, but there also shall they triumph over its power. We may, at all events, say that Micah's prediction was fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem and deportation of its inhabitants by the Chaldeans, so far as it for the first time unfolded the divine purpose that the way to the accomplishment of his designs lay through the overthrow of the kingdom of God as in its external condition it then existed. We may recognise a "remarkable historic providence" in the fact that the land which Micah afterwards distinctly calls Babylon was the land of exile. This, however, must be admitted, that his threatening was not fulfilled in a concrete historical form; he did not predict the fact of the deportation of the Jews by the Chaldeans; and his prophecy, notwithstanding his recognition of Babylon as the scene of Israel's greatest necessity and greatest deliverance, does not depart from the analogy of other prophecies, but remains within the operation of the usual laws and conditions.

(8) In Isa. vii. 14-16 there may be a clear approximation to the time in which the Messiah should be born, if really in the thoughts of the prophet Immanuel

was the Messiah. But we cannot regard this as a valid exception. The book of Daniel, as a later result of ancient prophecy, cannot here come into consideration.

(9) Hengstenberg's *Christologie*, 2d ed. iii. 2, p. 194.

(10) In order to justify Hengstenberg's conception of the historic features in the Messianic prophecies, it must not be overlooked that the only essential thing with him is the idea which God intended, and not what the prophet himself found therein. His idea, therefore, not concerning itself about "the nature of prophecy," but about a more accurate determination of its aim, had a relative justification. It would have been better had he adhered to his own postulate, that it would be well "to distinguish" the double sense, and not have so often mistaken the historical sense of the prophetic utterances. Against his spiritualizing exposition of the prophecies, see Delitzsch, *Die biblisch-prophetische Theologie, ihre Fortbildung durch Chr. A. Crusius und ihre neueste Entwicklung seit der Christologie Hengstenberg's*, Leipzig 1845, p. 167; Oehler, as before, p. 649; and Bertheau in *den Jahrb. für Deutsche Theologie*, iv. pp. 622, 626.

(11) The אֶתְרֵיכֶן in Joel ii. 28 is certainly an indefinite expression, but, taken in connection with what precedes, could certainly not in the mind of the prophet represent a long interval.

(12) From the refrain-like declaration in Amos ii. 4, 5, which is repeated almost verbally in Hos. viii. 14, we can hardly infer the destruction of the kingdom.

(13) The suffix in בְּאֶרְצָם (Joel iii. 19) does not refer to Edom, as, on comparison with 2 Kings viii. 20, it has been supposed to do. It is connected with בְּנֵי יְהוּדָה by אֲשֶׁר, and reads, "in whose land they have shed innocent

blood." See, for example, Isa. vii. 16, also Credner *in loco*.

(14) The opinion, that the prophecies of Zephaniah and Jer. iii. 6-vi. 30 are to be historically explained by the irruption of the Scythians into Western Asia, as narrated by Herodotus (i. 15, 103-106, iv. 11, 12), is not tenable.

(15) Oehler, as before, p. 654.

(16) Bertheau, as before, vol. iv. p. 625.

(17) In our opinion, the variously interpreted וְעָלוּ מִן־הָאָרֶץ (Hos. i. 11) is to be understood, in accordance with the parallel passage (1 Kings i. 35, 40), of the festive accompaniment of the king to his capital by the people.

(18) Compare Ewald, *Gesch. des Volkes Israel*, vol. iii. p. 585; and Eisenkohl, *Das Volk Israel unter der Herrschaft der Könige*, vol. ii. p. 204.

(19) We assign Zech. x. and xi. to the time of Pekah, Zech. ix. to a period rather earlier.

(20) As justice and judgment are the foundation of the throne of God (Ps. lxxxix. 14), so they are the foundation of *His* throne also.

(21) The words וּמוֹצֵאֵיהֶם מִמָּוֶה are to be understood partly in reference to the obscurity of the locality, and partly to the insignificance of the men who succeeded each other in the ten tribes. The objection, that all Israelites were equally of ancient origin, is worthless. Besides, we read "from an ancient family."

(22) That it was so has been maintained by Delitzsch, but his views do not correspond with the facts. See

Oehler, art. "Messias" in Herzog's *Real-Encyklopädie*, p. 414.

(23) Bertheau, as before, vol. iv. p. 684.

(24) That the Messianic King finds no place in the representation of the fulness of the times, as sketched by the later Isaiah, need not surprise us, if we consider that the prediction is only a more detailed repetition of the old Mosaic ideal of the divine State, according to which Jehovah exercised direct kingly government over the whole people.

(25) Hag. ii. 21-23 is, according to the analogy of Gen. xii. 3 compared with Gen. xviii. 18, xxii. 18, to be understood not merely of the person of Zerubbabel, but of him and his successors.

(26) It is confessedly doubtful whether the figure "like the Son of man" was, in the thoughts of the prophet, the Messiah, or, as Hitzig *in loco*, and Hofmann, *Weissagung und Erfüllung*, i. p. 209, *Schriftbeweis* (1 Aufl.), ii. 2, p. 541, suppose, a symbolical representation of "the people of the saints of the Most High." The latter view seems to be sustained by the exposition in vers. 18, 22, and 27, and כְּפֶר אֱנִשׁ certainly corresponds with פְּאֲרִיָּה in ver. 4 and כְּנִמֶּר in ver. 6, so that the animal forms representing the world-monarchies typify the human reality which lies nearest them; not an individual person, but an imaginary representation of another kind of dominion. If this view were correct, then, with Daniel as with Malachi, there would be a disappearance of the Messianic King, and a character would be given to his prophecy entirely corresponding with its historical circumstances. But we adhere to the ancient and most common interpretation of the passage recognised even in the book of Enoch (xlvi. 1, xlviii. 2, lxii. 5, 7, lxix. 27-29), and in

the fourth book of Esdras (xiii. 1, xii. 32), that the reference is to the Messiah. The visionary image, besides, points to the purely typical form in which persons are presented without figurative drapery; especially is this the case in the judgment scene, in which the representation, apart from the retrospect of verses 11 and 12, casts off the biblical allegoric character. Thus it is manifest that he who in human form appears before God is not a purely typical representation, but a definite person. This is confirmed by the fact to which Auberlen has already called attention (*Der Prophet Daniel und die Offenbarung Johannis*, 2 Aufl. p. 57), that in the 21st verse the saints of the Most High must be distinguished from the Son of man. It would, to say the least, be a gross incongruity for the saints to be the subjects of persecution by the little horn, and at the same time typical representatives of the Son of man, whose appearance is expressly represented in ver. 13 as a *wholly new thing*, occurring in the judgment scene after the destruction of the beasts. To this it may be added, that it cannot be said of the saints that they come "with the clouds of heaven." Notwithstanding Kamphausen, in Bunsen's *Bibelwerk*, the circumstance that the judgment-seat of God is in the heavens does not justify this expression; at the most, it could only furnish a reason for the elevation of the Son of man to that position. One would rather, with Hitzig, refer to Dan. viii. 10, according to which the saints are represented in the heavens by the starry hosts. The solitary use of the phrase can hardly be justified when it is remembered that it is used elsewhere only of God (Isa. xix. 1; Ps. civ. 3). It must be acknowledged that the supernatural character of the manifestation, which could not be inferred from the כָּבֹד אֱלֹהִים in פְּ, is intended by this. But then we can only think of the Messianic King as representative and instrumental under the Prince of the heavenly host, standing at the head of the saints of the Most High, who, according to the rather later third Sibylline book, ver. 286 (which does not refer



to Cyrus, as Hilgenfeld has rightly shown), *ἐσθραγόθεν*, and according to ver. 652, *ἀπ' ἡελίου* (falsely interpreted "from the east"), is sent from God. In Him the Messianic kingdom comes from above, from the God of heaven, to fill the whole earth (Dan. ii. 34, 35, 44), and through Him the saints of the Most High receive dominion and power (Dan. vii. 18, xxii. 27). That the Messiah is thought of as existing in heaven and coming from heaven, could be easily shown, if, as Oehler and Hilgenfeld think, in the book of Daniel, and especially in chap. x. 5, there is a combination of the idea of the angel of Jehovah with the Messianic idea. But it is not so; in the description of the angel, the words *בְּנֵי אֲדָם בְּדָמוֹת* and *בְּמַרְאֵה אָדָם* harmonize, not with *כְּבָר אֱנִישׁ* in vii. 13, but with the expression *בְּדָמוֹת כְּמַרְאֵה אָדָם* used by Ezekiel in his description of the theophany, in which there is nothing to remind us of the Son of man. Besides, if He were thought of as an angelic personality, His relation to the saints would hardly be represented as it is in vii. 18, 22, 27; and just as little, as Hitzig points out, can the ground of that representation be found in a fuller belief in immortality, and in the recognition of the Son of man after His death, as the ever-living David. Without unjustifiable dogmatism, the passage does not contain either the divinity of the Messiah or an implication of His pre-existence as a *ἀνθρωπος ἐπουράνιος* (Beyschlag, *Die Christologie des N. T.* p. 13). The prophet gives no indication of the future of the Son of man; he simply sets forth His connection with the saints; and the grounds for the representation that He is in heaven and comes from heaven are not to be found in His origin, or in any relation to God or men existing in His nature—in short, there is no metaphysical theology; but only the position which, according to the divine counsels, belongs to Him in the kingdom of God, with the additional idea of the theocratic Messianic kingdom drawn from older prophecy. He is conceived of as in heaven, and coming from heaven, only because He is the representative and instrument of the God of

heaven, and as such is given to Him of God that peculiar superhuman character and godlike dignity and state which the arrogance of the kings of Babylon, according to Isa. xiv. 14, led them to emulate. It may be observed, finally, that we do not therefore regard the argument drawn from Dan. vii. 18, 22, 27, for denying the comprehension of the Son of man with others as inconclusive; for vers. 13 and 14, so far as they lack the biblical allegoric character, do not require a special significance like the images of the beasts, the ten horns, and the little horn, for which we must present the parallel, that the saints of God having been given up for a season to the tyrant Antiochus, would in the end prevail over all the kingdoms of the world. Why the prophecy, though it once more shines upon the image of the Messiah at a time when there was no king, does not militate against our exposition, has been shown above.

(27) The closing words, "and the counsel of peace (unanimity) shall be between them both," are decidedly against the common opinion, defended by Köhler, *Die nachexilischen Propheten*, that the words **וְהָיָה בֵּינָם עֵלְ** **בְּקָאוֹ** are to be translated, "and He (the Messiah) shall be a priest on His throne." The idea of the concluding portion of the sentence above quoted is not, as Hengstenberg and Köhler think, that "the Messiah, in whom king and priest are one, conceives and carries out a plan which brings peace to the people of God." It is against the simple meaning of the words **בֵּין שְׁנֵיהֶם**; clearly they speak of two persons; and with Ewald, Hitzig, Bertheau, and Stähelin, we must translate the disputed passage, "*And a priest shall be on his throne.*" It is usual to refer the suffix in **בְּקָאוֹ** to **בֵּינָם**, but in this case the objections raised are equally well-founded. It is not characteristic of a priest to sit upon a throne, but to stand before Jehovah (Deut. xvii. 12; Judg. xx. 28),—an objection which is not weakened by a reference to 1 Sam. iv. 13–18. Moreover, it would have been but

an empty announcement to say that in the times of the Messiah there would be a priest. The suffix is to be referred rather, as the former על-בְּסֵאוֹ in the same verse, to the Messiah; and the sense is, that a priest will sit by the side of the Messiah upon His throne. The thought is correctly given by the LXX.: καὶ ἕσται ἱερεὺς ἐκ δέξιν αὐτοῦ. We may further point out, that the juxtaposition of a Messianic king and a Messianic priest agrees with the idea that in Zech. iv. the two olive trees, royalty and priesthood (comp. ver. 14), are the depositories of the oil—the Divine Spirit—through which the theocracy flourishes. The violent emendations of vers. 11 and 12 by Ewald, Hitzig, and others, I regard as wholly superfluous. My idea of the passage is confirmed by H. Schultz, as before, vol. ii. p. 257.

(28) The מַלְאָךְ הַבְּרִית is not identical with the messenger mentioned as going before Jehovah, neither—against Ewald and Hitzig—is it Elijah; for the relation of the two parts of the verse to each other, and especially their perfect parallelism and equal reference to Mal. ii. 17, forbid such an interpretation. From both it is evident that the appearance of the angel of the covenant coincides with the coming of the Lord to His temple, while Jehovah's messenger, Elijah, precedes both. Neither does מַלְאָךְ in Mal. iii. 2 suit the appearance of a man; nor does the judicial function ascribed to the angel of the covenant suit Elijah. But then we must not think of the Messiah (Hengstenberg), nor of another Moses (Hofmann); the meaning is rather, the angel of Jehovah, in whom He Himself appears, inasmuch as He permits His name—His manifested nature—to abide in him. Gen. xxiii. 20, xiv. 19; Deut. xx. 16; Isa. lxiii. 9. As covenant angel, he is characterized in essentially the same manner in Ex. xxiii. 20 et sq.

(29) Whatever shortcomings there may be in Hof-

mann's *Weissagung und Erfüllung*, in consequence of his violation of the laws of criticism, it is to his merit that he has first, from the standpoint of faith in revelation, given prominence to this connection between history and prophecy.

## NOTES TO THIRD SECTION.

(1) Compare Hengstenberg's *Christology*, iii. 2, p. 185.

(2) Compare Bertheau in the *Jahrbuch für Deutsche Theologie*, vol. iv. 334–353, who goes too far if he believes himself able to explain all non-fulfilment of prophecy by the necessities of the case, and whose exposition seems to favour the idea that there is nothing unconditioned and unchangeable in the divine purposes, and that especially the time of the fulfilment of prophecy was not foreordained in the eternal counsels of God. From later remarks, however (p. 655), this hardly seems to be his meaning.

(3) Compare Oehler, art. "Weissagung," in Herzog's *Real-Encyclopädie*, xvii. 655.

(4) Compare with the above positions the striking remarks of Tholuck in *Die Propheten und ihre Weissagungen*, pp. 149–156.

(5) Compare Oehler, art. "Weissagung," p. 656: "It is not the consciousness of the individual prophets, but the spirit of revelation, which in the Old Testament removes at every progressive stage of prophecy what, as the mere form of the time, had adhered to predictions of an earlier period, until in their fulfilment it is clearly seen how far the symbolic covering extended."

(6) See my *Lehrbegriff des Hebräerbriefes*, p. 253.

(7) Certainly in the Apocalypse (iii. 12, xxi. 2-4, xxi. 10-27) the kingdom of Christ, as it now *exists in perfection only in heaven*, and first came down to earth at the time of the advent, is in immediate relation to the Jewish phrase, "the new Jerusalem." On the other hand, in the Epistle to the Hebrews (xi. 12-16, xii. 22, xiii. 14), "the kingdom of heaven," first existing in heaven, and so far still future, but even now established on the earth, points the faithful to intercourse with a supersensuous heavenly world. (Comp. my *Lehrbegriff des Hebräerbriefes*, p. 117.) "The Jerusalem which is above" has, with the Apostle Paul, essentially the same meaning. (Gal. iv. 26; Phil. iii. 10.)

(8) See, for example, Auberlen, *Der Prophet Daniel und die Offenbarung Johannis*, 1854, p. 341. Also a treatise of his on "Die Messianischen Weissagungen der Mosaischen Zeit," in the *Jahrbuch für Deutsche Theol.* 1858, part iv. pp. 791, 801, 834. Also Hofmann's *Schriftbeweis*, vol. ii. sec. ii. p. 74, 1st edition.

(9) So, for instance, T. T. Hess, in his *Briefen über die Offenbar. Joh.* p. 130; also Auberlen, *Der Prophet Daniel*, p. 352; and Hofmann, p. 538; and also, though less literal, M. Baumgarten, in art. "Ezechiel," in Herzog's *Real-Encyclopädie*, iv. p. 303.

(10) We recommend the advocates of the view condemned above to an unprejudiced and thorough consideration of Bertheau's excellent treatise on "Die alttestamentliche Weissagung von Israels Reichsherrlichkeit in seinen Lande," in the *Jahrbuch für Deutsche Theol.* 1859, pp. 314, 595, and 1860, p. 486.

(11) Auberlen, *Der Prophet Daniel*, p. 344.

(12) Compare Auberlen, *Der Prophet Daniel*, p. 348.

(13) So, for example, Oehler, in art. "Weissagung," in Herzog's *Real-Encyclopädie*, p. 658.

(14) "The wonder of Israel's existence to this hour, while every ancient people has been destroyed, or, by mixing with foreign blood, has ceased to be recognisable; the double wonder, that when other nations remain in their ancient seats, Israel has been scattered throughout the world,—is the great commentary upon the history of revelation." (Auberlen, *Der Prophet Daniel*, p. 348.)

(15) Oehler, as before.

(16) Zech. ii. 10-12 can be quoted here only on the supposition that we misunderstand the peculiar apocalyptic representations which mark the night visions of the prophet.

(17) Auberlen cannot deny this, but thinks it may be only "for the present dispensation that Israel is rejected."—*Abhandl.* 803.

(18) This limit to the prophetic knowledge respecting the entrance of the Gentiles into the kingdom of God is broken through in some measure only in Isa. xix. 19-25 and in Zeph. ii. 11.

(19) Auberlen, *Der Prophet Daniel*, p. 347.

(20) Hofmann, p. 656; Auberlen, *Der Prophet Daniel*, p. 341. The attempts to explain the silence of the Apocalypse are unsatisfactory. It sounds very ingenuous when, among other things, Auberlen says, "The Apocalypse is intended for the times of the Gentile Christians. It communicates to the Gentile Church what she needs to know in her pilgrim course. It is for her a handbook of the journey, in which her fortunes are described; and Israel as a nation cannot therein come into consideration." As if for the Gentile Church it was not of greatest importance to know that Israel must first be converted and re-established as a nation

before she herself could fully enjoy fellowship with God and complete regeneration! In the second edition this is omitted. On the other hand, all importance is attached to the mention of the 144,000 in Rev. iv. 7, and to the "solemn general confirmation of Old Testament prophecy," in Rev. x. 7. But this "general confirmation" is meant in the sense unfolded by the further predictions of the Apocalypse.

(21) We pass over the words of Christ in Matt. xix. 28, xxiii. 39, xxiv. 34. Though appeal has been made to them, an unprejudiced exegesis cannot find in them a prediction of the future restoration of Israel as a nation. Compare Bleek, *Synopt. Erklärung der drei ersten Evangelien*, ii. 272, 382.

(22) Endeavour has been made to prove that Paul promises to converted Israel a special historical deliverance, partly from the expression *χαρίσματα* in ver. 29, and partly from the words, *τίς ἡ πρόσληψις εἰ μὴ ζωὴ ἐκ νεκρῶν* in ver. 15. But this expression cannot, in the connection, imply the bestowment of special gifts of grace upon Israel for the fulfilment of her calling. They point only to the gracious gifts already existing amongst the blessings of the kingdom of God (*χάρισμα*, as Rom. v. 15, 16, vi. 23). But this expression must not be translated by bestowment of grace, for the LXX. never render *יְרֵכָה*, which is used in this sense, by *χαρίσματα*, but by *τὰ ἐλέη*, or similar words. And in this paragraph of fifteen verses there lies not, explain as we may the expression *ζωὴ ἐκ νεκρῶν*, according to the corresponding sentence preceding, the idea that life from the dead should originate in converted Israel by virtue of its call to be the instrument of salvation.

(23) On the contrary, we read as follows in Auberlen's description of the consequences of Israel's restoration: "No need now laboriously to seek after the heathen; they come of themselves, drawn by the abounding grace

of the divine revelation which they see before them." *Der Prophet Daniel*, 352. Also, "Israel shall be a kingdom of priests, bringing salvation to all peoples." — *Abhandl.* 835.

(24) Comp. Bertheau, as before (1859), 325: "In the few places (of the New Testament) where there is opened to us a view into Israel's future, she stands among the nations that share in the blessings of the kingdom of God, not as the triumphant first-fruits, but rather as the latest child, for whom there is still reserved a share in the Father's mercy."

(25) The fact of the continued national existence of Israel in her dispersion cannot, in these circumstances, indicate that a great historical mission is before her. We need not here enter into the historical reasons for this, nor attempt a reply to the question how far her existence may be expected to continue in the future. It is enough to remark, that Rom. xi. and other parts of the New Testament place it in a different light, inasmuch as they represent the nation that rejected the salvation of Christ, first as an example of the divine justice, and then as a still more remarkable example of His mercy and truth.

(26) Notwithstanding its unhistorical character, the ancient church conception of this prophecy, which Hengstenberg has vindicated, especially in his essay, "Die Juden und die Christliche Kirche," *Evan. Kirchenzeitung*, 1857, Maiheft, is in its results essentially just, and far removed from any tendency to Judaism. Very striking is Keil's remark (*Genesis*, 146, der zweiten Aufl.): "By Christ, prophecy is raised from its temporary form to its essence, and through Him the whole earth becomes a Canaan." Compare also the detailed exposition of the whole question in his luminous commentary on Ezek. 347–497.

(27) It is remarkable that the advocates of the



Judaizing view of prophecy respecting the future glory of Israel do not include in their expectations the personal return of Elias (see Hofmann, as before, ii. 1, 103). Generally they hold the view which prevailed in the Church until the Reformation, according to which the fulfilment in John the Baptist was only preliminary to the full accomplishment of the literal sense to take place immediately before the advent. But Christ with that *εἰ θέλετε δεῖξασθαι* certainly condemns the doctrine of a literal fulfilment in Himself and His Church of prophecy respecting Israel's glory and call to the work of saving the nations.

(28) The most minute and brilliant picture of this glory is given by the later Isaiah. The reader will remember that, to represent the magnificence of the city of God, he brings to its building the most glorious and costly things the earth affords, gold and silver and precious stones (Isa. liv. 11, 12, lx. 17), and adorns and beautifies it with gardens of delicious fruits (lx. 13).

(29) The pledge and symbolic representation of this is the stream flowing from the temple, which becomes a mighty river, transforming the Holy Land into a paradise (Joel iii. 18; Zech. xiv. 8; Ezek. xlvii. 1-12). Respecting the all-satisfying goodness of God enthroned in the midst of His people, see also Isa. lx. 19, 20.

(30) See Delitzsch, *Isaias*, 634: "Of a happy future the Old Testament knows nothing. Beyond the present is Hades. A heaven of glorified men the Old Testament does not recognise. Around the throne of God there are angels, but not men." Sentences limited by the remembrance of Enoch and Elijah, but retaining their full force so far as the contents of Old Testament prophecy are concerned.

(31) With Tholuck, we cannot regard Isa. vii. 14 as directly Messianic. Respecting Mic. v. 2, see the second section of this treatise.

(32) The  $\text{בְּכֹר}$  in  $\text{אֵנֶשֶׁת}$  may not be urged in the interests of the superhuman character of the Son of man spoken of in Daniel, as appears from its correspondence with the  $\text{בְּ}$  in vers. 4 and 6. And just as little can the doctrine of the pre-existence of the Son of man be founded upon this passage.

(33) The difference would be less if modern representations of Christology, as far as they adhere to the God-man, but drop the personal pre-existence of the Son, would sufficiently express New Testament knowledge. Its not accidental relation to the Old Testament idea of the Messiah has not yet been properly considered.

(34) See the undeveloped forms of this prophecy in Joel iv. 21 and other places, as Zech. ix. 14; Isa. iv. 5, 6; Zech. xiv. 3-11; Isa. xxiv. 23.

(35) Comp. Oehler, *Prolegomena zur Theologie des A. T.* 67, and art. "Messias" in Herzog's *Real-Encyclopädie*, 408. Such passages as Ezek. xxxiv., and especially the 24th verse, we cannot regard as opposing evidence, for the Messiah is associated with God simply as the instrument through whom He Himself exercises a shepherd's care over His people, as elsewhere God and the king are mentioned together (Prov. xxiv. 21; Hos. iii. 5; 1 Sam. xii. 3-5; Ps. ii. 2). These passages belong wholly to the former class; a visible appearance of Jehovah Himself is not the subject of which they treat.

(36) The name of the Messiah,  $\text{יְהוָה צְדִיקֵנוּ}$ , Jer. xxiii. 6, affirms only that through Him as the instrument, Jehovah the King would vindicate His people and give them deliverance, happiness, and security. In harmony with this, the same name is given to the city which was representative of Israel (Jer. xxxiii. 16).

(37) Delitzsch very forcibly presents the latter idea

in his exposition of Isa. xl. 66. See his *Comm. zu Isaias*, 484.

(38) See Bertheau, as before (1859), 320 : "So many threads of prediction running through the Old Testament in various connections, meet together in the Mediator of the New." Oehler, art. "Messias," 417 : "It belongs to the nature of prophecy to present *disjecta membra*, which become harmoniously united in the fulfilment. For all the essential conditions of New Testament Christology the presuppositions are found in the Old; but neither the organic connection nor the explanatory word is given until we behold the accomplished revealing facts."

(39) Jonath. Mic. iv. 8 : "And Thou Messiah of Israel, who art hidden on account of the sins of the congregation of Zion, to Thee shall the kingdom come," etc.

(40) Compare, for example, Jonath. Isa. iv. 3; Isa. xxii. 14, lxv. 6, 15; Hos. xiv. 10; Isa. xxvi. 15, 19, and other places.

(41) Many Psalms, for instance, especially those which have the king for their subject, through their use in public worship on account of their original historical sense, have gained an additional higher Messianic meaning. See Herm Schultz in his essay, "Ueber doppelten Schriftsinn," *Stud. und Krit.* 1866, Haft 1.

(42) Excepting that in Isa. liii. 12 the sentence remains, "because He hath poured out His soul unto death," which the paraphrast scarcely understood to mean the literal endurance of death.

(43) This important feature in the testimony of the synoptical Christ concerning Himself, which, not less

than the much spoken of text in Matt. xi. 27, corresponds with the self-witness of the Christ of John, has not been sufficiently considered.

(44) A closer examination of New Testament quotations of Old Testament prophecy does not come within the sphere of this treatise; and to what has been said, we can add only a few general remarks. The New Testament writers, and even Christ Himself, considered the Old Testament Scriptures solely in the interest of the knowledge of truth and salvation as they have to do with life from God and in God. It therefore never entered their minds to inquire what the prophets themselves understood by their predictions, or how they were understood by their contemporaries. They inquired only what the Spirit of God said therein to *them*, *their* contemporaries, and to men of every age; they asked for the permanent divine contents of the Old Testament writings, and therefore always regarded them in the light of New Testament knowledge given through Christ. Thus their understanding of prophecy is throughout conditioned and limited by its fulfilment. Still their exposition is by no means arbitrary. Only seldom do they present such individual interpretation and arguments, the force and validity of which we cannot accept. And these are just the cases in which the New Testament writers undertook, with the method of their Jewish contemporaries, namely, the allegory of the Alexandrians, to give a more learned and scholastic argument (Gal. iii. 16, iv. 21-25; Heb. vii.). As a rule, their interpretations consist, not in the citation of irrelevant matter by means of allegory, but in a profound insight into the ultimate result to be wrought out by the Spirit of God from the inner germ, a perception of the ideal and permanent contents really contained in the Scriptures under the veil of the temporary history of the times. They find in the Scriptures a sense which passes far beyond that which a strict historical exposition can discover; and this sense they regard as that which was

intended by the Spirit of God. But this sense is not arbitrarily put into it; it stands in internal connection with the historical sense; with an inner necessity and a legitimacy of which the apostles themselves were not always clearly conscious, by the light of the new covenant, they understood the Scriptures in that higher sense. In two respects their interpretations have an objective foundation. On the one hand, there are the ideal contents, which, enclosed in Old Testament and temporary historical forms, or associated with definite relations, are really present in the written word; on the other, there is the divine teleology dominating and shaping the history of redemption, by virtue of which the entire old covenant becomes a symbol of the new dispensation. In the first, the thoughts of God provisionally come into view in an imperfect manner; in the second, and through Christ, they are more fully and essentially realized, and the inner connection between the historical sense of the Old Testament writings and the sense given by New Testament interpretation from the standpoint of fulfilment is established. This typological interpretation, in distinction from the allegorical, is first called into existence by Christianity. While the historical exposition evolves the meaning which the Scriptures had for the writers and their contemporaries, the typological exposition points out the meaning which it gains in coming to its final aim in Christ, and indicates the ultimate result of those hidden decrees of God which are revealed in the fulness of the time. Whether the expositor is conscious of it or not, it always has for its basis the historical sense, so far as it does not confine itself to the external and accidental,—allegory, for instance,—but originates from insight into the central idea. Generally speaking, New Testament interpretation is of this sound, justifiable, typological character. Its authors were familiar with the Old Testament economy from immediate observation and experience; they were at home in the inner sanctuary of the old covenant, therefore had they a clear vision for the eternal divine

idea forming the germ of the Old Testament writings. Thus their use of the Scriptures betrayed a simple avoidance of exegetic science; they generally limited themselves to the application of individual passages as proofs, and to those passages whose permanent truth-contents commended themselves to their Christian consciousness, and in which unsought prophetic testimony concerning New Testament blessings presented itself before their eyes. It would not be easy for them in an arbitrary manner to apply favourite texts to Christ and His salvation. For details, see Tholuck's treatise, *Das Alte Testament im Neuen Testamente*.

(45) Comp. Hengstenberg, *Christology*, ii. 88.

(46) See Oehler, art. "Weissagung," 656.

(47) Comp. Auberlen, *Abhandl.* 790.

## NOTES TO CONCLUSION.

(1) Hengstenberg, *Christol.* iii. 2, p. 204; Keil, *Comm. zu Ezechiel*, 521.

(2) See my treatise, *Ueber die besondere Bedeutung des A. T.'s für die religiöse Erkenntniss und das religiöse Leben der christliche Gemeinde*, Halle 1864, 25.

(3) Lücke, in his preface to the second edition of De Wette's *Comment. zur Offenb. Joh.* S. xiii.

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